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CONTENTS

A Friend of Cara's	Louise Betts Edwards	I
The Hyphenated American	James Jeffrey Roche	44
The Shining Gloss	Certrude Lynch	45
How to Live in Luxury	McLandburgh Wilson	52
Which One Was He?	J. J. O'Connell	52
Icelandic Lyrics	Bliss Carman	53
The Summer Girl	E. W. Chase	56
The Story of Jees Uck	Jack London	57
The Beautiful	Marzin Dana	71
The Capriciousness of Memory	Virginia Leila Wentz	72
A Man and a Maid	Alice Stead Binney	73
Forethought	Louise Winter	74
"As the Coming of Dawn"	James Branch Cabell	75
An Open Question	Helen Chauncey	80
An Appointment	Catharine Young Glen	81
Song of Selim's Sword	Clinton Scollard	84
The Youthfulness of Wilkins	Emery Pottle	85
Pernicious Pride	Albert Lee	90
Newport, the Apostle of Estheticism	Douglas Story	91
Pan	Reginald Wright Kauffman	94
An Undistinguished Man	Charles W. Westron	95
The Rainbow	Cora Gaskill Alberger	97
A Midsummer Medley	R. K. Munkittrick	98
The Logix of Circumstances	James Hazleton Willard	99
Lullaby of the Celtic Child	Victor Plarr	112
The Tragedy of a Carriage-Call	Roy Melbourne Chalmers	113
Song	Harvey Maitland Watts	114
An Experiment of Jimmy Rogers's	Justus Miles Forman	115
Fleurette	Theodosia Garrison	127
The Fool and Love	Louis E. Thayer	128
Le Paletot Noisette	Louis Faran	129
Unsettled as Usual	R. F. G.	131
On a Fan	Felix Carmen	132
Why?	The Baroness von Hutten	133
A Woman's "No"	Samuel Minturn Peck	134
Mrs. Chisholm's Companion	Julie M. Lippmann	135
Fortune Smiles	Truman Roberts Andrews	140
In the Bachelor's Garden	Temple Bailey	141
Life and I	John Vance Cheney	145
The Search	McCrea Pickering	146
The Measure of Life	Carlton T. Chapman	147
Interpreters	Zona Gale	156
A Love Song	Frank Dempster Sherman	157
The Late Sam Patch	Tom P. Morgan	159

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A FRIEND OF CARA'S

By Louise Betts Edwards

And their revenge is like the tiger's spring,
Deadly and quick and cruel; yet as real
Torture is theirs—what they inflict they
feel.

"I WISH you to say a good word for Cara, please."

"I did not quite catch it," said the new editor. He did not rise for her, but swung around the other swivel-chair in the cubby-hole of a room at the head of the inhuman stairs, which was quite an attention from a younger man to an old lady. And he was such a busy younger man! Tall, well-built, with a hard, smooth face, he was in aspect almost like unto one of Bunyan's Shining Ones. Not merely his forehead, which showed a tendency to explore the back of his neck, but his small, anxiously intelligent features glittered with a sort of world's polish. His nose-glasses sparkled, a collection of diamond jewelry upon his person scintillated, his very clothing had the sheen of spickness and spanness which denotes newness. He was expensive, and he knew it, and he wondered if it were right to waste himself on this eager-eyed old lady of rapid speech and nervously fluttering hands, who repeated, still breathlessly, the remark with which she had burst in upon him:

"I wish you to say a good word for Cara."

"Are you quite comfortable?" solicitously asked the new editor, whose ground-glass door panel bore the legend: "Society and Drama." It was partly on account of his manners that he cost. "Take this fan. The steam heat makes the air oppressive." He wished he could tell from her clothes

whether she were rich or poor. He was one of the sort who care. But all old ladies dress so oddly! Her bonnet evidently had been, and perhaps still was, handsome, and that was fine lace around her throat, fastened with a big brooch. Her gown was forlorn and draggily about the hem, but that was caused by the rain.

"I should be delighted to oblige you," he said, kindly, "but I don't know a soul in the world by that name, except Cara Melville."

"Well, she's the one," quickly. "She comes here next week—do you know it? But of course you do. It was on account of your being the person who would write about her that I wished to see you. I am a friend of hers—Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage," poking about for a card in a little black bag. "Being a stranger, the name of Armitage is, of course, unfamiliar to you," with some condescension.

But it was precisely there that she was wrong. "There's an old bird called Armitage," the managing editor, when inducting the new editor into his office, had said, with the simple reverence for age which is so striking a feature of our times; "you want to cultivate her. Never saw her beat for knowing all that goes on and telling all she knows. She's related to every Armitage in town and to half a dozen of the other best families, in a lot of devious genealogical ways. There is no one in real society whom Miss Armitage doesn't know and won't talk about. That's why the *Eagle* gets a lot of inside society news the other papers can't touch. Why she gives it,

Sept. 1902-1

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I don't know, except that her family, it seems, have taken the paper for twenty years, and Hay, who came before you, knew how to approach her. I don't know, either, why her friends tell her so much of their private affairs when they know she can't keep a secret, but that is their business, not ours."

"Miss Armitage, I am so happy to meet you," said the Shining One, impressively, warmly grasping her hand, resolved not to be outdone by Hay, who came before him. He now saw that she was a woman one would know for a lady anywhere, that the bonnet was still elegant. The face in it had the ochre tint of sixty, but showed few wrinkles, and the brown eyes, rather too large and projecting, were unfaded and alert—the eyes of a club-and committee-woman, not a knitter by the hearthside.

"And as regards Cara Melville," he continued, "let us sit down and have a little talk." For she had half-risen to go, after stating her wishes. "Candidly, I had not intended giving Cara very much space, before I heard that she was a friend of yours." This, he felt, was "Posture 1: Diplomacy."

"Mightn't you call her Mrs. Melville?" asked the lady, quickly.

"Why, yes, I suppose I might—though no one does."

"Thank you. You see, it is different with me, with whose niece Cara went to school. And why were you thinking of giving her so little notice? It is fortunate that I stopped in."

"Well," and the Shining One's chair tipped back—not rudely, it did not get so far; but just far enough for him to clasp his slim bediamonded hands behind his gleaming head in an easy, effective posture, which he mentally labeled, "2: Calm Consideration." He spoke suavely, yet solemnly, as though the fate of a criminal hung on each judicial syllable, while the bright, protruding brown eyes of Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage rested scrutinizingly upon him.

"In the first place," he almost cooed, "do you think we ought to—ah—encourage her very much, on

moral grounds? Our paper has a large—ah—family circulation, in the very best homes, as no one knows better than yourself, my dear Miss Armitage. Of course Ca—Mrs. Melville is a friend of yours and a delightfully clever and entertaining person, and—ah—is doubtless, in one sense, all right, although, as you know, there is talk. But, in another sense, could you, from your heart, dear Miss Armitage—" he spoke now as though coaxing a child; it was a manner he had admired in magazine offices—"commend her course, or wish it to be held up as a model for the young girls of our country to follow? and young wives, and youthful mothers?"

"Certainly not." The lady of the four names leaned forward earnestly and bobbed her large ear-rings emphatically. "I think it is perfectly awful. I wrote her at the time a long letter of remonstrance, but I suppose she has been too busy to answer it yet, or else thinks I don't understand these troubles between husband and wife, which is true enough. For a long time I wouldn't believe it," with a movement of the excitable hands. "After she wouldn't answer my letter, I came down myself to see Mr. Hay—he was the man before you; such a nice man! did you know him?—and asked him if it were true. We have taken the paper for twenty years, but it seemed such a serious thing to believe against Cara, and without her own corroboration, too. But, since she has done it and is now dependent on her own talents for support, she must live, and as I did not think the papers were treating her kindly of late, I thought I would speak to you."

"But, Miss Armitage, Ca—your friend has not been drawing such good houses as she did."

"Just the reason—" Miss Armitage began, eagerly.

But the Shining One had not finished. "These matters, Miss Armitage—" he was trying to fix the name in his memory—"are always of strict conscience with a dramatic critic. The last time I saw Cara Melville it struck

me that her vein of inventiveness had given out. No one can think of novelties forever. She never was handsome; now she is six years older than when she commenced, and there are younger and prettier imitators of her style. Then, too, her voice is going off. She never had any to go, in actuality, any more than she had looks. She just held herself together as long as she did by pure Cara-Melvillity, as you might say, for she never could do anything but act."

"Then all the more cause," said Miss Armitage, decidedly, "for us to stand by her, if her voice is going, and other people are unprincipled enough to imitate her. Of course, I have never seen Cara on the stage. I attend the theatre very little, and I have been told that these performances she gives are really no more or less than vaudeville."

"Then," inquiringly, "you have not seen her since she left Mr. Melville."

"Oh, not for a longer time than that! I never really met Cara but once, and that was when my niece brought her home from boarding-school to stay at my house over a Saturday and Sunday. But I have her photograph taken at that time, and I always retained an interest in her after she came out in society through what I read and heard. You editors published so much about her, while she was only a slip of a girl, that I have sometimes blamed you for turning her head. Then, when that thing happened and she was thrown on her own resources, I felt I must stand by her, because those of us who don't understand these matrimonial troubles should not judge. I am contemplating giving a small dinner or reception for her at my house, just to show that the Armitages recognize her. No, please don't write that down," seeing his pencil dart toward a sheet of gray copy paper. "I might not be able to get the people to come, for there is a great deal of censoriousness concerning Cara."

"Well, I will try to oblige you,

Miss—" heavens, he had nearly said "Hermitage"! Farewell, then, to exclusive tips on society news! "I will give Mrs. Melville all the space and praise I think she is worth."

"Please give her a little more, can't you? I understand it is often done. And I feel so anxious for Cara's future! She was such a nice girl at sixteen!"

Mr. Fanning's burnished countenance radiated a slight smile. "Josie," he said at the dinner-table that night, "there was a Dickensesque old lady came to see me in all this afternoon's pouring rain. She wants me to give Cara Melville more space than she is worth, because she is not so young as she was."

"Who? the old lady?"

"No; Cara. I wish you would listen intelligently. Also, stop using those straw mats under dishes. They are away out of date."

"Well, who's Cara? and who's Dickerson?"

"Great heavens, Josie, did you never read the papers even before I wrote for them? I know you haven't done it since. Dickens—oh, Dickens ran for vice-president in 1859. But Cara Melville was the woman who slapped her husband's face at a garden-party on their grounds, and then left him and her child, to go on the variety stage."

"He must have scolded her for using straw mats," said Josie.

"Oh, no," said Mr. Fanning, grimly, not smiling now. "Cara was never that sort."

II

WHAT sort was Cara Melville? had been a question somewhat fiercely debated half a dozen years before, when her name had been on the gossiping lips and in the startled ears of all that large section of society which enjoys gossiping and being startled. It had come up again at recurring periods thereafter, but more faintly, and now had hard work to hold its own as a

topic of interest, among so many other like questions concerning women who were very similar to Cara.

To be quite the same was not altogether possible. However unprincipled persons might imitate, Cara somehow managed to surpass them. It had begun when she was a gay little orphan of five, dashing across prohibited lawns belonging to uncles and cousins, on prohibited ponies, with her brief crape-trimmed skirts flapping smartly around her small red head. Cara was wont to be caught, but first she enjoyed a good gallop.

The pity usually accorded to a child left alone in the world somehow glanced off Cara Clay. It had an aspect of absurdity, applied to a girl who did exactly as she pleased in everything; who was spoiled by relays of relatives, near and remote, each in turn, who passed her from one to another, like a lending library, and seemed to find the same entertainment in her; a girl who succeeded almost sensationnally in everything she undertook, including feats of varied mischief. In the school-room Cara headed her class, when she took time from other occupations, in which flirtations, ever suspected and never proved, played their full part. At the graduation exercises she was valedictorian, as a matter of course, and by electing to be amusing instead of sentimental, sent refreshed fathers and mothers, but, above all, brothers, into ecstasies.

In athletics it seemed scarcely worth while to compete with Cara, save that a foil for her triumphs must be had. And she took them, as she had delivered the valedictory, with such frank enjoyment, and won them so evidently by a mixture of luck and dash and indomitable industry mixed in with the cleverness, that it was difficult to resent the facts that she was golf champion of two English-speaking countries; that she, she alone, could participate in a century run and come in, the last woman to hold out, without looking horrid and disheveled like other last women. And

maiden aunts, her own and other people's, who disapproved of girls entering on these execrable feats of endurance, said, "Oh, Cara Clay does everything, and can do it."

Cara could sail a boat; Cara could win prizes at polo matches—the girls urged her to marry soon, that she might have a house of her own to hold all the cups and ribbons and similar stuff she captured in these contests. In private theatricals she was dazzling, wonderful, especially in comedy parts, where the quality called by Mr. Fanning "Cara-Melvility" bewitched audiences prejudiced against her acting by her preëminence in everything else.

It seemed odd to leave all this to go and live on a Colorado sheep-ranch with Will Melville. She could have done better than Will, but, "You always expect that sort of girl to marry the sort of man that you wouldn't expect her to marry," people said, lucidly, and gave her the very best wedding presents money could buy and the very best wishes heart could desire. The girls drew a rather relieved breath and knew that now there was more room for them, and the society papers ceased to use her pictures.

Will Melville was a quiet man, considerably older than Cara, with golden-brown eyes and a golden-brown Van-dyke beard. That was really all Cara's set knew of him, save that he belonged to a good family which had thoughtlessly omitted to amass great possessions; Will's were represented by the sheep-farm, on which he had spent his small patrimony before selecting Cara as a wife—no one would have done it after. The wedding-cheque with which the wealthiest uncle washed his hands of Cara was expended on an addition to the farm's acres, of which Cara was as proud as of the home-made frocks of her girlhood. People thought she must be very much in love. The girls said her letters home were sickening.

Cara playing *Andromache!* and to an audience of one! It seemed ineffably comic, after so much *Mary Stuart* and

Nance Oldfield and Mrs. Pillicoddy. People who had accused her of a modicum of selfishness beneath her charm were brought to confusion by reports of Cara as the most notable of housewives, Cara as a sheep-farmer, even as a sheep-shearer and doctor, and a successful financier; for under her practical advice and energetic assistance Will's farm prospered and his flocks doubled.

By-and-bye the reports grew less comic. Two children died, and were buried under infant trees set out by their own small hands. Will had a long illness, through which Cara, all alone, nursed him, with her baby at her knee. But worldly gains increased until, at last, Will was able to sell his ranch at a handsome profit and with Cara and their one remaining child to return to the East, where he bought a share in a wool-broking business and Cara smilingly held out her hand for the reins of social leadership which she had relinquished.

Every one knows what a difficult thing this is to attempt. It is as though the stone which has sunk in the pond with a great splash should, after a century, lift its head and try to emerge through the old opening. Cara accomplished it, however, whether with ease or with difficulty no one ever knew. As the wife of a comparatively wealthy man and the mistress of a home of her own, she swayed social destinies more absolutely and brilliantly than she had ever done in her girlhood. The newspapers bestirred themselves for a fresh set of photographs, though she seemed the old Cara, with little sign of the tarnishing years or the bitter bereavements that had passed over her chestnut-curled head—just as Will seemed the same Will, older than Cara, with the same golden-brown hair and Vandyke beard, and seldom evident socially. In one moment, however, he became the most-talked-of man in New York society. And that was when his wife, as Mr. Fanning had said, suddenly turned, while conversing with him at their own garden-party, and, in the

presence of thirty or forty assembled guests, struck him full in the face. Then she walked tranquilly down the garden-path, where the stunned spectators made way for her, ordered a small handbag packed quickly, and was out of the house before the red mark on her husband's cheek had faded to white, or the first uncomfortable visitor had sounded the signal for a general stampede. And with the house and her husband she left behind their little boy, six years old.

No expostulating uncle, no insistent emissary of the press, ever received a statement of her reasons for such action. Both were treated alike by the two concerned; to all questions Mr. and Mrs. Melville had, each of them, "nothing to say." The partial answer came when Cara went on the stage and had a first, second, and third season of meteoric success. She was so invincibly clever! Getting the usual start of the public in finding that heavy parts suited her but indifferently, she left the legitimate drama and became—it is difficult to say what, except Cara Melville. But she kept audiences in transports. She twinkled like a planet, with new ideas in amusing; she wrote amusing playlets herself and acted them; she wore herself lean studying music, with the result that she hypnotized people into believing that she could sing; she even wrote the music of her songs, hitting on the expedient of composing them extempore, as fast as she could jot the notes down on a great blackboard, laughing quite as heartily at the grotesque harmonic combinations and false chords as any critic in her audience. Her very smile became the rage. Then she starred the British Isles in a triumphal tour, and ere long hazy noblemen were connected with her in rumor, not as offering themselves in marriage, but as ready and anxious to do so if she were free. She queenied it in bohemia as in the more conservative circles of her native city; but, though gossip perpetually buzzed about her name like a covetous bee, it never quite succeeded in rifling

her of that which we call "reputation," and yet her reputation was never unchallenged—this was impossible, in the set with which she went. The old Cara Melville receded more and more from public view, together with the paragraphs and contradictions of paragraphs in the newspapers, to the effect that "influential friends were again endeavoring to reconcile Cara Melville and her husband, the well-known wool-broker;" or that "Mr. William Melville, husband of the famous variety actress and improvvisatrice, Cara Melville, was about to bring action for divorce on the ground of desertion."

Then something rather curious happened. The Cara of the present also began to recede from notice. Later sensations, younger and prettier rages, crowded her close. She worked indomitably, grew leaner, more inventive and resourceful, less and less successful. It seemed as though, having made her second great splash, the waters were meeting over her head.

"But you can't down Cara," said certain members of her set, whose fortunes were bound up in hers; "she'll think of something else."

III

Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage, related to every Armitage in the city directory, had never before been in a hotel where theatrical folk lodged. Her quick eyes revolved around the gilt-and-white parlor, like the bright brown globes of an orrery on their pivots. It was wholly like other gilt-and-white parlors. It was, in fact, rather more gorgeous and odoriferously new than was the Bellevue, where most of her out-of-town friends put up when they did not stay with her, who was raptuously hospitable. There were very few other hotels whose threshold her trim, scudding little feet had ever crossed. She plucked up heart for Cara's prospects, if she were able to lodge in such splendid surroundings. She wished there were some way of telling whether all of the persons

passing through the green-carpeted hall and making occasional incursions into the reception-room, where she sat on a strain of acute observation, were actors or not. She supposed not, since she had always heard that you could detect them at once. She had never seen a player off the stage.

Cara's maid entered the room with the excuses for which maids are employed. Mrs. Melville was resting before a rehearsal; Mrs. Melville was working very hard; she saw no one but reporters; would the lady excuse her?

The lady flew into an odd little rage, lasting about two seconds, during which her feet tapped the floor, her eyes and both her diamonded hands flashed dramatically, and her head, with its iron-gray "front," so smoothly parted as to deceive the very elect, wagged furiously. "I have missed a committee meeting of the Daughters to come here. I intend to see Mrs. Melville." All this in stern staccato. "Did you give her my card? I thought not. Tell her at once, please, as my time is valuable, that, if she does not recognize my name, it is an old friend of hers."

Cara Melville threw off the silk quilt under which she was lying in her bedroom, and both her long thin arms were outstretched over her head. Should she change the kimono she wore for a Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage, whom she could see in the next room, her boudoir, through the parting of the rich portière, but who belonged nowhere in her heavily charged memory? "Armitage—Gouverneur Armitage," she repeated, scanning the card on her dressing-table, while she snatched up the dragging mass of chestnut hair, all curls and rings, and ran one pin through, which held them. As Mr. Fanning had said, she had never been pretty. She carried finely a figure that had lost too much of its roundness; the hair was good, though frequently criticized as too curly; the olive eyes were cold and unlighted, with the mist and weariness of lost sleep in them, and none of her other

features would have been looked at twice, if attention to them had not always been compelled. She felt a little cross, and did not change the kimono to step through the doorway to meet an old lady with waxy, crinkle-less cheeks distended in a delighted smile and dark eyes that threatened to lurch out of their sockets, as she seized both her friend's hands with her own. "My dear child! Cara! Oh, how naughty of you not to recall me! Nelly Nelson's aunt—don't you remember?"

"I remember every good time I ever had in my life," said Cara, "and that one with Nelly was at your house, wasn't it? and there were about a thousand nephews invited to meet us, and you made up a box-party for the very theatre I'm now leasing, and everything was jolly as the day was short. What a beast I was to forget! and what a dear you were—and are—to hunt me up in this horrid plush place!"

"I thought it nice," said Miss Armitage; "nearly as handsome and refined as the Bellevue, and the people—" She had nearly said, "do not look theatrical."

"But, my dear girl—" Cara had always called every one that, except men—"it is ruining me!"

Miss Armitage's eyes jumped.

"Financially, I mean," explained the younger woman. "I have my own company this season, you know. I concluded it was rather dangerous to trust in one's unaided talents—and it takes more nerve and capital than you can think, Miss Helena! You see, now I am remembering everything, even that you prefer that name to Miss Armitage."

"From you, Cara," rather quickly. "I always liked and took such an interest in you. Are you—are not you—don't things prosper, Cara? You see, I do not wholly know the terms to use."

"Neither do I, Miss Helena—never having been taught swearing when I was young. And I should never do it before you, anyhow. Things are just about as bad as they can be—

audiences fiendish, critics insane. I say these things just to you, though you probably read in yesterday's *Eagle* that 'Mrs. Melville declared that her reception in American cities had never been so cordial as during this season, and laughed at the report that slender box-office receipts were about to force her company into insolvency.' Did you ever know me when I was insolvent? I don't suppose you see Sunday newspapers, else you would know that was a corking send-off Fanning gave me—nearly a full-page 'appreciation,' with a three-column picture. I wonder what started him?"

"Do you know Mr. Fanning?" asked Miss Armitage, hastily.

"Only since he called to interview me. We are old friends now, of course. He was gorgeous about my first night, too. I think I made an impression on him. I'm sure I tried to."

"Why, Cara!"

"I never had to try before, that is true. Don't looked so shocked, Miss Helena; I'm the most circumspect little Cara that ever was. I've invited his wife as well as himself to a little Welsh-rabbit affair up here, Sunday night. I've a notion the wife won't come, though, which is her mistake. Oh, dear! you disapprove of Sunday, don't you? But it's my only free night."

"Why, Cara, I never judge anybody, for I think we understand so few things in this world. That is what I always tell the Daughters when they wish me to oppose this one or that one in an election. As you say, it is your only night. Poor child! you must get very tired."

The other looked up and smiled. Then she clasped the long arms at the back of her head, in an attitude Miss Armitage admired very much, though reluctantly, for it was a stage attitude. But it expressed a certain sense of languid power, of the restrained hand that but bided its time, to which the old lady's own valiant spirit kindled. Then Cara smiled again, more quizzically than before, and, unclasping the

hands, took a lace-mitted one in her own. "Did you ever know me when I was tired?" she asked. "Why, I shall have 'Resurgam' on my very tombstone. You women without livings to earn don't understand these matters. This is my work, the one thing I was born into the world to do—" she spoke with a sudden energy—"the thing I would die without; and the temporary aberrations of audiences or critics, or even myself, are nothing, except things to conquer. I love to conquer!" Her eyes shone suddenly; she sprang to her feet; her whole being, inert a moment before, glowed in energy like a lighted lamp. "Did you ever see me act, Miss Helena?" she asked, coaxingly. "Why not? It is the third time I have appeared in this city, and my appearances have not been brief."

"Why, Cara, you have only just come here, this season. And you know I am a very busy person, even if I do not earn my living. The time before that, I was in Europe. And the first time—"

She stopped in an embarrassment which her friend, still with that quizzical smile on her mobile face, made no effort to relieve. It was the inevitable moment of discomfort they had both been trying to ward off with talk. Miss Armitage smiled nervously and looked out of the east window. Mrs. Melville smiled tranquilly and looked out of the north one. Between them lay the shadow of a letter unanswered, an explanation withheld. Miss Armitage saw so vividly the scarlet burning cheek of a man, the sad, moist face of a lonely child, that she wondered how Cara, even in her rushed life, could put them entirely out of her memory. And if so, she could never put them out of other people's memory, which was very hard on Cara, if there was any good reason for the thing she had done. One must stand by her, at all events. She was the same generous girl as of old, when she would lend her Paris hats to Nelly and the other girls before she had worn them herself. Here she was offering Miss

Armitage a season box-ticket, which every one knows is very expensive.

"I will send it to you by mail, and never once ask whether you use it," Mrs. Melville said. "You transparent Miss Helena, don't I realize that you do not wish to see me act, because you know me? But I will not tease you, for I want to see you again before I leave—may I not? It is so jolly to meet an old friend who doesn't—" She paused abruptly.

But Miss Armitage had been waiting for this chance, and eager words were ready.

"I knew it would be. I came to-day, Cara, with the intention of asking you to make my house your home during your two weeks here. I intended it, even before you spoke of the expense of this hotel and your—ah—financial anxieties. No, don't thank me; what is it beside a box-ticket, which really costs money? If I had any more means than just enough to live on, besides that house, I would—"

"You would lend your head along with the money, you dear thing, and I would rather have the head—it thinks of such kind things." The long arms were slipped about the older woman for a moment—no more; Cara had never been an affectionate girl. "I could no more accept your offer than I could adequately thank you for it. Dear Miss Helena, theatrical people must live at hotels, and, besides, the rest of the company is here. If I left the house they would assuredly think I was going to disappear without paying them—I'm my own manager, you see. Oh, dear, you don't understand, do you, or forgive my ingratitude?"

"I don't presume to criticize, Cara; you know your own affairs, my dear child. I must go now, so as to catch the end of one committee meeting and the beginning of another; but if I can think of something more practicable to do for you, I will do it."

"Get up a box-party for me," suggested Cara, mischievously. "Never mind. Good-bye. It's nice to meet an old friend who doesn't—"

She stopped again; in her own

heart she knew that in the friend's heart the friend did.

IV

MANY women earn their livings with more of leisure and self-sparing than Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage allowed herself in the pursuit of pleasure or duty, whichever she conceived it, among a maze of organizations. Chief of these was one to which she vaguely alluded as "The Daughters"—of whom or what, her family were the last to know or care, as club-women's families usually are. Arriving at the place of assemblage on this occasion, she found herself entirely too late. Vacant chairs, with a stolid janitor climbing up on them to close the windows, were all that confronted her. Not a Daughter was left to tell the tale. Miss Armitage sighed a little.

"If it is so late as this, there's no need to sit on those orphans at such a distance" she decided, quickly. "There will be a quorum without me, and they know, anyhow, that I am always in favor of admitting any one that applies. What's the difference between one Protestant orphan and another? Their parents are all equally dead. I will proceed to Athelstan's at once."

Mrs. Athelstan Armitage was the social head of the Armitages. Mrs. Don Armitage, her daughter-in-law, was a somewhat restive heiress-apparent to this honor. Between the two arose considerable friction, which Miss Armitage always considered it more delicate not to notice. She really loved peace too well to attempt the peace-maker. But as she could not go to Mrs. Athelstan's without passing under Mrs. Don's very windows, she stopped there first.

Mrs. Don was glad to see her. Servants, governesses and children had all been troublesome together, and a listener who never by any chance advised or criticized and was withal one of the family, before whom no reserve need be maintained, was a boon. But when it came Mrs. Don's own turn to listen, she shook her head.

"I'm really surprised at you, Aunt Helena," she said, in a monitory tone, being herself under no bond not to censure. "Of course, Cara Melville is very bright and dashing and all that, and was very much the vogue before we had Yvette Guilbert."

"You would scarcely expect a woman of Cara's stamp and standing to compete with—"

"I was not aware any one knew just what her stamp and standing were. As an actress, I consider her completely unobjectionable. I have laughed myself very nearly ill at her imitations and inventions, and I have recognized her, since it is recognition you wish, to the extent of eight tickets for a box-party last night. But I will not attend any reception or dinner or anything of the sort, in her honor. A woman who deserts husband and children in that callous, light way, without a word of warning to him or of explanation to the public"—the inflection of resentment sounded in the last clause especially—"injures all society as well as them." She looked triumphant, like one who has just hit on an original presentment of a great truth. "And to lower her dignity in that perfectly shocking and open manner, with a slap in the face, like a washerwoman married to a coal-heaver, was insulting not only him but all womanhood." She almost declaimed the last words. The thought flashed over the mind of her startled relative, how many potential actresses besides Cara society sheltered in its bosom!

"Suppose I slapped Don every time he was hateful?" continued Mrs. Don from the heights of moral sublimity. "I feel like doing it many a time, I can tell you, his own aunt. I believe I have more to bear from him than Cara Melville ever had from Will Melville, who is a mild, gentle, old-cow sort of man, every one testifies; who let her follow her own bent in all things. Suppose I left him? Suppose every one deserted her children as soon as they became troublesome? I am sure the depravity of mine is only equaled by that of the governesses I engage to

curb it. They take it from their father's family. I can say these things to you, Aunt Helena. If Cara Melville is as discouraged as you say, she had best see if her husband will take her back, unless he has at last applied for that divorce."

A slow, pale red forced itself into the waxy cheeks of Miss Armitage, who felt as though something more soft and sacred than a man's face had been struck. In a year some married women will forget the delicate, impossible ideal of sex relations that some unmarried ones carry with them into heaven—which, we hear, has as little use for it as earth. "Oh, that would not be nice," she said, hurriedly—"would it? I don't particularly understand these things, of course. I suppose there is very little use in going on to Athelstan's, if you all feel this way."

"To mamma's? I should say not. She is actually a fanatic on these points. If you do not sit with your children in your lap all the time, she says you are neglecting them for society. And yet the leadership of a great set devolves on me. That is why I could not possibly attend your reception, my dear. It would be committing all society to Cara."

"I see," said the aunt-in-law, humbly, and proceeded to the house of her brother, in a deeply dejected frame of mind. "Her arguments are unanswerable," she said to herself, sadly. "Yet it only shows how many are against Cara and how necessary it is to stand by her. And Isabel is so positive in her expressions and so opposed to the Daughters! I never understood tact, or generalship, or those things."

"Exhausted, I see," said her sister-in-law, sternly, when Miss Armitage arrived. Isabel was massive, gray-pompadoured, typical. People who did not wish to be swayed exasperated her. But she was good to the poor. "You will, doubtless, continue to drag about town from committee-meeting to committee-meeting, on foot or in horrid cars, no matter how many times I tell you our carriage is at your dis-

posal. And it is only for those foolish Daughters and unwomanly street-cleaning agitations, after all; instead of the destitute poor who really require attention. If you must exhaust yourself, why not in a good cause?"

"Because bad ones appeal to me more, I suppose," answered the unswayable, with a forlorn smile. "I am not tired. No, don't ring for any lunch; I am not hungry. I am only discouraged."

"Over Daughters?" grimly.

"Over daughters-in-law. I thought Don's wife would help me, being herself young, and fond of society and pleasure."

"She is fond of very little else," said Don's mother, still more grimly; "least of all, of helping people. I have tried in vain to interest her in charity visits. What did she refuse you?"

"Why, Isabel, I—am thinking of giving a little reception at my house, and she would not attend—a reception to Cara Melville," she added, desperately; "she is acting here."

"To Cara Melville! Oh!" And Mrs. Armitage's silence could have been felt through every wall and partition of her house, down to the very kitchen, where the maids felt as though some one were walking on their graves.

"I understand," said her sister-in-law, sadly. "Of course you are not a friend of Cara's, as I am, and you agree with Blanche, just as she said you would. Blanche really talked very well."

"Talk is not everything," remarked Mrs. Athelstan. "What did she say? I wish to know with what I am supposed to agree."

"Oh, things unanswerable. Poor Cara! That it was wrong to strike one's husband, for instance, even if he were as trying as Don, whom she often felt like slapping."

"So, she said that," noted Don's mother, with thinning lips. "What else?"

"That it was wrong also to forsake one's children."

"She should know. Her own have very little mothering, I am sure. It

strikes me as unfitting for her to throw stones at a woman for doing by wholes what she does by halves. I never heard that Cara Melville left her little ones to governesses while she was with them, at all events. And Blanche's children are so charming—the very copies of Don."

"Yes, she spoke of that, and said that was what made them so troublesome."

"Troublesome!" repeated their grandmother; and again her silence was eloquent. "Has—has this young woman, of whose career I have not kept a close watch, lived an exemplary life since leaving her home in that singular way?" she demanded. "Are the plays she presents unobjectionable?"

"I do not know," answered Cara's friend, simply. "I have never seen her act, or met her, till to-day, since she was sixteen." She rehearsed her reasons for desiring to accord Cara "recognition," while her brother's wife listened with knitted brows. "Of course I can appreciate Blanche's position," she finished. "She said a great social system revolved around her and that to appear on such an occasion would be to commit all society to Cara."

"You over-appreciate it, I think," remarked Mrs. Armitage, senior, coldly. It sounded strange to her sister-in-law to hear her speak thus of any one but the Daughters. Her attitude was rigid and two red dents burned in her cheeks. "Blanche Armitage may believe she leads society, but I am not yet superannuated or superfluous. If indifference to husband and home and children were the sole requisites, she would doubtless far outdistance me. But, thank heaven! the domestic virtues are not yet wholly discredited. If I choose to appear at your reception, it may affect your friend's future very little; but it will affect it even less if Blanche stays away." It was the fire of a long-smouldering animosity that was lighting her cheeks. "She might be suspected of too close a sympathy for

Clara—Ara—what is her name? Of course, I can speak in this way to you, Helena."

Pure, thankful bewilderment unsteadied the footsteps of Miss Armitage as she hurried, obstinately carriageless, from the house, before Isabel should have changed her mind. The Domestic Virtues had promised to grace her little gathering and even to persuade some other socially weighty personages to throw themselves into the balance. She must write a note immediately to Mr. Fanning. She had not liked the man, but it was evident he could be useful to Cara. No; first she must tell Cara herself. And, unable to contain her exultation, impatient as a child, she altered her intention and her direction, and rushed back to the theatrical people's plush place to tell Cara.

V

CARA heard her through in a scrutinizing silence. Then she spoke, and it was Miss Armitage's turn to listen, with the mitted hands folded, unusually quiet, and with the buoyancy ebbing from her face perceptibly, as the blood from a wound. When the other had concluded, Miss Armitage rose. "You must, of course, do as you think best, Cara," she said, suddenly tired, as beseemed a woman of years who had been running about all day without any luncheon. "I thought only of your good." One could see that when she reached home she would cry.

Two sinewy hands suddenly shot out from behind Cara's back, where they had been clasped, and seized Miss Armitage's shoulders, with a grip gained from tacking sails and reining in refractory ponies and holding struggling sheep to the shears. "Don't dare to go away angry," she commanded; "no matter whether I deserve it or not. I know you thought only of my good. But it would not be for my good to be bored to death."

"But why should my friends bore

you?" asked the spinster, eagerly.
"Our best people!"

"Miss Helena, I'm done with best people, except those I find in bohemia's fringe. I have lived there so long, where we have best and worst and all the between-kinds, that I would feel stifled among those who are all of one kind. Variety is what I crave, Miss Helena!" And again the lights in her fagged green eyes leaped up and she smiled at the word as we smile at the names of those we love.

But Miss Armitage did not smile. She ran her eyes up and down the gaunt figure of the girl—for girl the younger woman always is to the elder—and the plain, animated face, with its coaxing, twisted lips, and felt in her startled heart the hostile grip of fact on faith. The faces of the forsaken man and child she had never seen pushed themselves insistently upon her vision. She would not judge Cara, but—Isabel might, and might even judge truly!

Cara read in her face some of Isabel's thoughts, vicariously mirrored. "You are quite right," she said, speaking with the greatest slowness. "I am wholly right. Yet in one thing I go deep enough, Miss Helena," and there was a sudden overflow of passion in her voice, sharply shut off, like the loud pedal inadvertently touched at the piano, "I feel a hurt to that same light vanity, or whatever it may be, that I keep where I suppose I should keep my heart, and I will not bare it for blows. Did you ever know me when I was snubbed? I will not come under best people's roofs, even the very best," smiling at her friend. "No, I will not be stared at by them—save on the stage, where they pay for the privilege—or received, or rejected, or whatever their moment's whim may direct them to do, and to undo the moment after. There are not very many proud women in the world, Miss Helena, or there would be no world; but I am one of the few."

Miss Armitage sighed. "I suppose you must be what you think it best to be, Cara."

"Listen," said Cara, eagerly; "I have just thought of something, and you positively must not refuse, or I shall know that you think me horrid and my friends, too. I cannot come to your party. But you must come to mine. Ah, yes, Miss Helena! I will change the night from Sunday to Monday to suit you. That means it will be later, but Fanning, or somebody, shall see you safely home. You know Fanning."

"But I do not like him," put in Miss Armitage, promptly.

"Oh, he is all right. He drops that manner after a while."

"So I suspected," said the first speaker.

"But you will like the others. Rose Riter is a dear little thing. She belongs in the company. She can't act, but she has pretty, taking ways, and she has had trouble with her husband and been driven to leave him, so I took her in just to give her a chance. There's Howell Grannis, too—he's not an actor, but an Englishman of a very aristocratic family, charming and cultivated. But, wherever this company goes, there Howell Grannis follows, or perhaps gets there before us. Isn't it ridiculous? He is as deeply in love with me as I will let him be."

"Oh!" said her listener, involuntarily.

"I said, as deeply as I would let him be. Then, there's Teddy Ward—the funniest thing you ever saw, especially when dancing on a table. Don't look so shocked, my dear girl. He always pays for the dishes. And what is the difference between a table and a floor, morally speaking?"

"None, I suppose," acknowledged Miss Helena, humbly. "But, Cara, I hope you won't think it is in a spirit of reprisal, but—I would not meet your friends for all the world! I never mixed with such people in my life! I have no doubt they are wholly respectable, but it is in such a strange way—falling as deeply in love with married women as they are allowed to do and having trouble with their hus-

bands and leaving them—" it was her own cheek, not Cara's, that reddened—"and dancing on tables. I do not judge them, dear, but I am not used to it!" Hands and eyes flew about in distracted punctuation of her remarks. "At my age I could not begin to become used to it. Make my very respectful excuses to your friends, Cara—no, there is no use in coaxing me—and I—will go home, I think, and after luncheon make your excuses to Isabel."

VI

A HOUSE of her own—its privacy, its independence, its very loneliness—had been the heart's dream of Helena Armitage since girlhood and its joy since mature womanhood, when the father, dying, had left to her, as the only unmarried member of his numerous family, the old-fashioned house in which they had all been born. In every large brood you will find at least one like her, whom the clatter and the crowding, the crossing of interests, the very life and laughter, of the rest, fret into a consuming desire for a place of peace of her very own. Once installed in it, she reveled in hospitality. Her guest-chamber experienced many changes of occupants, but few breathing spells. A convention of Daughters in the city—which meant visiting delegates to be entertained—the flying trip of an out-of-town friend, an overflow in the houses of her equally hospitable brothers or sisters—all these gave gladness to the soul of Miss Armitage.

And, too, to come home after a trying Sunday, beginning with the Chinese school, which she had conducted for thirty years, and pivoting on a dinner at Brother Athelstan's, set between two long church services—it was restful to come back to a house absolutely uninhabited save by one's self and one's servants. To eat a solitary supper and then read a solitary book, strictly suitable to the day, by a solitary fireside, or, perhaps, write a letter or two, in blank peace, and then slip down in one's wrapper for a bed-

time lunch set out by Maria, the waitress, before she retired—this also had its satisfaction in another way.

It was a late lunch to-night, for Miss Armitage had written more letters than usual. As she took her seat at the table, a funny little dignified figure, in her plainly made woolly wrapper of pink-and-white stripe, a glance at the big Chippendale clock showed her that it was close upon one o'clock. In returning, the glance rested at the end of the table. For there, clear to the inner senses, she saw the plain, wistful face, wonderfully winning in spite of the weary green eyes and the big bleak features, of Cara, whom she had judged. Against the principle and practice of a lifetime, she had taken upon herself to weigh a friend in the balance and, still worse, to find her wanting.

The face had bothered her in the same way when she had sat down to sup, hours before. And, oddly enough, at that very moment Rose Riter had laid her hand on an empty arm-chair in a dining-room at the Hotel Royal. "Who sits here, Cara?" she had asked.

"A lady who couldn't come," her hostess answered.

"Mrs. Fanning?" whispered Rose, mischievously. For Mrs. Fanning had been prevented from attending by a headache, her husband had explained, with his last exhibition of *The Manner*.

Cara had shaken her head. The spell of two observant, bird-like black eyes, half out of an earnestly bobbing head with jade ear-rings bobbing with it, was upon her. Mr. Fanning's glittering face could not outshine them; the huge bunch of Neil roses in the centre of the table, sent by Howell Grannis, could not conceal them; Rose Riter's over-loud laughter, harmless and soulless as a little kitten's shrill mew, and Teddy Ward's funniest turns could not drown a sober, surprised voice, saying:

"It is such a strange way of being respectable!"

Well, Miss Armitage was right. It was a strange way—a fevered,

electric-lighted, noisy, trap-door way, with—oh, God, what toil to attain it at all, and to hold it when attained! And in every one's record a "but." Fanning was a clever writer, but—Mrs. Fanning had had a headache and could not come. Teddy Ward's was a heart brave but battered, Rose Riter's one true but tawdry, and Howell Grannis was a gentleman but a loafer, and Cara Melville—the old question! What sort was Cara Melville? You shall learn, Miss Helena! In amazing suddenness the long-stifled human longing for sympathy, outpouring exculpation, rose up and shrieked in Cara. It was too much, to be misunderstood by a whole world! One fellow-woman should know why she walked in this strange way!

After she left the table she pulled Rose Riter to one side. "I'm going to disappear," she said, shortly. "They can make the same noise without me. I believe I hate Teddy Ward. You explain that I was ill, if they miss me. And send Fanning out to me in the reception-room, when you get a chance. I want him to take me somewhere."

Miss Armitage jumped from her seat at the first peal of the door-bell, holding aside her pink-and-white striped draperies with one hand and with the other the dining-room portière. Her eyes projected farther into space than ever. No, it was not a mistake, for, even had her ears deceived her, she could see the alarm run along the moving wire at the second loud, strong pull.

She was not timid, but Jacob, the butler, was. Moreover, he slept in the back of the house and would never hear the bell. Unhesitatingly she scurried across the hall in her loose straw slippers and, with much rattling of chains, opened the door. "What is wanted?" she asked, composedly. "Cara! Has anything happened? Come in, quickly, dear child! Is any one with you?"

"Fanning was," replied Cara, unwrapping her very beautiful cloak;

"I sent him away when I saw the light. What luck, to find you up!" She laid her arm on the old lady's shoulder for an instant, which was a great demonstration for Cara.

"And how fortunate it is that I have food all ready on the table!" chattered Miss Armitage, leading her visitor into the dining-room. She was one reared in the ancient theory that a guest was always hungry.

"How pretty your table looks!" said Cara. "So homelike! I had forgotten how a family table looks. How do you keep your biscuits so crisp, Miss Helena? And such nice, sharp cheese! It is a regular school-girly, picnicky lunch! Yes, I will have some cold meat, thank you. I believe I am really hungry, though I have been sitting at a dinner-table half the evening." Yet, Miss Armitage saw very well that she merely broke up the biscuit, wasted the cheese and "fiddled," as that lady called it, with the meat, all the time excusing herself for eating so much. "I worked so hard all the afternoon, studying on a new part," Cara went on. "I am thinking of going back to the 'legit,' after all—legitimate drama, that means. Then you will come to see me act, will you not? This is a dog's life, and a circus dog's at that, making a fool of one's self to amuse other fools. The variety stage is like a lined crazy-quilt—you get all one deadly color on the side turned toward yourself."

"Yes, of course you do," said Miss Armitage, courteously but uncomprehendingly.

"Fanning is going to write me a play," continued Cara. "He is really awfully nice, even though you don't like him. Clever, too. Feels a little too sorry for himself, however. He married his landlady's daughter at a time when he had no expectation of becoming a society editor. Life would be endurable if it were not for its marriages, would it not, Miss Helena?"

"My dear, how should I know? I never was married."

Cara looked at her and laughed, a laugh more affectionate than a kiss—

from her. She pushed back her plate and chair. "You would know me a thousand years and not ask me why I did it, wouldn't you?" she said. "You dear little Lady Helena!"

"Why, Cara, I felt that if you had cared to talk about it, you would have done so long ago, to people of more importance than myself."

"There are none," said Cara, impetuously. "I left all my friends at my own table to-night, to come over to tell you such a joke!"

"A joke, dear?" doubtfully. Miss Armitage had but slight confidence in her own sense of humor.

"Yes, really; such a grim one, Miss Helena! All this pother and publicity and excitement and impertinent questioning, all this pity for Will Melville and cautious arm's-length attitude toward me, as though there were some awful mystery surrounding our parting! It's the most ordinary episode of life. Only, as a general thing the wife hasn't the spirit to leave, or the talent to earn her own living. If only Abéla^rd and Héloïse had happened to be commonplacely married, how the romance, if not the tragedy, would have vanished from the situation forever! People are so stupid! Don't they know men tire of women? They should, since one-half of them are men and the other half women!" She laughed, not so sweetly as before.

"But I understand less than ever," said Miss Helena, confusedly. "I had thought you were so happy together. Those letters you wrote Nelly from the ranch, telling how you did the housework together, how devoted and considerate he was, were they——?"

"No; as it happened, they were not lies. I suppose I would have written so in any case, for people have not very often known it when I was downed, or disappointed, or slighted. Having no parents to blubber to is a training, Miss Helena! I early learned to put on my smile as I did my shoes and stockings, whether I wished to or not. But Will was all right those first years —indeed, I suppose he never was anything he could help being. It was my

mistake in marrying him. Don't ever marry a man older than yourself, Miss Helena!"

"My dear, I scarcely could."

"He was older," continued Cara, unemotionally, "and he was quiet—at least I called it by that name. Never marry a quiet man, Miss Helena! So he attracted me, because I was young and—not quiet. He seemed a great, strong bulwark to rest against. And, at last, I felt cold—I looked up—and found it was because he had turned to stone. Does it not seem strange, Miss Helena, that the same God should have made two creatures so different as man and woman? I had been a good wife to Will Melville," sudden fury flashing in her voice, "I had borne and buried his children, I had left all I ever loved or knew for him, I had shared every grief and tried to augment every joy that came into his life—his wretched, cold, self-contained life, into which I poured all my own, as into a mould. Whatever I finally come to, now that I do not care, I have those eight years to my credit. I honored him, even obeyed him, though that doesn't sound very credible; cherished him in sickness and in health, because I—wished to make a success of marriage as I had of everything else—everything else!" striking her fist on her palm as men do.

"It was a high sense of duty," commented Miss Armitage, admiringly, "and should have had its reward. And without loving him, too!"

Cara turned her face away. "I loved him all right," she said, in a moment. "That had its reward. He wearied of me, and before I wearied of him! I can never forget," with an angry, crumpling clutch at the table-cloth, which she twisted into cords as she spoke, "that there, where I cared most, I was beaten, outraced—I, Cara Melville! There should be schools, Miss Helena, where women can be taught to tire of men gracefully and in plenty of time, since it seems to be beyond hope that men should not tire of them." She threw the cloth from

her. "I hurried the sale of the ranch," she said, "because I thought the trouble came from our being shut up together too much. And then two of the children had died."

"And he did not care about that, either, I suppose?" sympathetically.

"No-o; he was rather good then." Cara once more turned her face away. "One can't always be having deaths to soften and humanize them," she said, shortly, when she turned back. "Oh, no woman's-rights champion could be more bitter against men and against marriage than I. That the whole thing is a hideous failure is beyond doubt. If I had not my living to earn, or took any interest in public questions, I should probably be on the platform instead of on the stage, agitating—something or other. Perhaps if another theatrical season fails, I may publish my unhappy matrimonial experiences in a book and make something out of them."

"Cara!"

"Oh, Miss Helena, I don't care very much about anything any more, except success and a good time and a few things like that. But let me tell you about the New York years and get through with it. We had so counted on the time when we could sell the ranch and come back here to live in comfort; and it was such a ghastly mockery! Some of my kind friends have blamed me, I hear, for throwing myself into the social whirl where my husband did not follow me. Why should I not throw myself into the life that I loved, for which I had been starving for eight lonely, hard-working years? And why should he not follow me? I had followed him into his life, as far as Colorado, and one's fellow-creatures are not poisonous to mix with. He sat and sulked at the head of my table when I gave dinners, and slipped away as soon as he could, and everywhere I went I was the woman without a husband. He left me in spirit—a sly, cold, hypocritical desertion—long before I left him openly, relieving him of the necessity to talk to me and giving him the

opportunity to find some one who did interest him. He cared as little for one woman as for another; though," contemptuously, "I wish he *had* cared more! I could have won the game—though I was never pretty. I would at least have shown some signs of life. Life is what I crave!" clasping her strong, lean, nervous hands excitedly. "Against all my nature I curbed myself for eight years and was the most patient of drudges for him. Miss Helena, can you imagine me churning butter and scouring floors and stitching overalls? Yet," wistfully, "those were the happiest years of my life."

"So, they were easy to live, after all!" said Miss Armitage, thoughtfully.

Cara flushed a little. "I was good all the while, too," she said, sharply. "I never gave that man a cross or hateful word, until I—slapped him."

"And he gave you many, I suppose, poor girl!" compassionately.

"I thought I had made it clear that he gave me no words at all. He once let two weeks pass by without kissing me, and did not know it—if he had only known it! If it had only been that he was angry, or wanted something, or was thinking of something! I don't know what he wanted or was thinking of. I fancy he was vaguely miserable. Selfish people usually are, don't you believe?"

"Yes, indeed. Pity you could not have helped him out of it in some way, just as a friend might."

"Two selfish natures are better parted, Miss Helena. I saw that, as I saw a great many things, and I was determined to act differently from most women. I looked ahead of me, still alive and young, and saw those last gray years of the neglected wife; and I would not stand it—no, I would not!" The anger leaped higher in her eyes. "Do you know what most unhappily married women do? They meekly wipe furtive tears from their pale cheeks and clasp their children—*his* children—closer to their hearts; or they clasp some one else closer to their hearts, which I never did; or they take to clothes as men take to drink.

I'm not of a sobbing or embracing nature. But I feel things; and I could not take to clothes more than I have always done."

She flashed a smile full of mischief and Cara-Melvillany on her hostess. "I will own I was hasty in my way of doing the thing," she said. "I thought it easier to get along in the world than it is, and I did not realize the difference between amateur and professional theatrical success. But I've got along, and enjoyed myself. My only mistake was in not making my financial preparations more prudently. But one day—that day—I struck him. You know that."

"Yes, dear. I wish you had seen your way clear not to do it."

"I saw nothing clearly, Miss Helena. Do you know, I had never felt actual rage before in my life? It came suddenly, like a red cloud or a wave of blood, and I was part of it. We had a lawn-party, you know. They had been teasing me to recite for them, and I thought it might not be dignified in my own house, and—I thought, too, that Will might not like it. He did not seem to like anything. I asked him, and he replied that he did not care. It was so true that I slapped him. It surprised him, I think, for he had never seen me angry before. I told you I had been a good wife. I hurt a few inches of fatty tissue, I suppose; he had beaten my heart into insensibility, out of sight. Oh, how—how I hate that man! Why," consistently, "did you bring this subject up?"

"I don't know what I was thinking of," apologized Miss Armitage. "He seems certainly to have been a most unsuitable companion for you, Cara, who are so fond of gaiety, so accustomed to praise and petting. The stage must have been a great resource to you in your troubles. But—Cara, wasn't there a little boy? You have not mentioned him. Perhaps there is some mistake—" her voice died of its own shyness. It seemed so impertinent even to think of things so outside her province and that of the Daughters.

"Oh, yes," said Cara, curtly; "there was Billy, all right." She did not turn away her head here, as Miss Armitage involuntarily expected her to do. "That was inexcusable," she said, coolly. "But I had not time to think or plan much, and I should not have been allowed to keep him, had I taken him, and—"

"You could not stay, I suppose?"

"I could not stay. Had he been a little girl, it might have been different. But he was the living image of Will Melville and, indeed, seemed part of him more than part of me, and I—somehow felt he would grow into another man, to make another woman wretched, and I could not touch him, did not want him—I never pretended to be crazy over children, anyhow. Old Mrs. Melville, I understand, is bringing him up very well."

"Yes. It was a pity."

"Oh, no, it was not," quickly. "If a woman can leave her child, he is better off without such a mother. Did you never go to a mothers' congress? They all understand about such things. And don't you ever—ever go to bed in this house? You never had such a tired Cara in it!"

Full of compunction, Miss Armitage led the way to the guest-chamber. "Always ready, Cara," she said, proudly. "We will not talk a moment longer. Pleasant dreams, my child! Let me light your candle."

A bedroom candle! Cara had borne such across the stage, but in her own room she was used to faint gas or dazzling electricity, according to hotels. There seemed something quaint, picturesque, productive in itself of pleasant dreams, in the stiff silver thing, with an actual wax candle in it, which she raised over her head when Miss Armitage had left, to survey the room in sections of light. Chippendale furniture, of course; a silk-square quilt on the bed, whose sheets would surely be lavender-scented. How it all accorded with the candle! Decorated ceiling and walls—

"Good heavens!" she said, suddenly, and set down the candle.

From the soft gloom of the shadows on the wall beside the bed there gleamed out at her, unsubdued, two of the most awful eyes she had ever seen. One hears of eyes that guard a secret. How much more terrible are eyes that demand a secret! and not one only, but, with a simple, overwhelming completeness of confidence, all the secrets, dark or bright, that the withered, cunning world hides from youth. In a word, they were the eyes of a girl of fifteen.

Cara laughed, not lightly. She picked up the candle to cross the room to the picture. Something dragged on her shoulders—as though to hold her back. It was her green satin cloak, the work of her own clever fingers. With an impatient movement of her body she shook it down on the floor, where it lay outstretched like a glowing rug.

She studied curiously the young figure in the carefully framed photograph. "Heavens!" she murmured again; "did I ever look like that? I had completely forgotten the old thing." She tried to laugh at the prim, parted hair, the ridiculous sleeves, the pensive attitude over the pasteboard photographic balcony with its stiff drapery. It was no use. We love ourselves. Why deny it? There are times when the love amounts almost to worship, and when one looks back over the destructive years and sees a young, innocent, awesome self, scarce recognizable, save by a few shreds of its clothing, from a self one has never been at all, a lump gathers in the throat. Cara's laugh softened slowly to a smile, ashamed of its own fondness.

"I was a nice little thing," she sighed, frankly. Then she turned away and thought she would go to bed.

The eyes had no intention of allowing this. They had not been answered yet. With the too persistent questioning, "What will I be? what will happen? — who? — when? — why? — where?" and a whole dread catechism of others, they followed Cara about the room in her restless movements,

piercing certain wrappings about her soul, which crumbled like a mummy's envelopment when exposed to the air. She felt an absurd necessity to explain to the eyes, to plead, to justify herself, passionately; to accuse others—as she had felt with Miss Armitage. Well! she had eyes still. Eyes! what were they? Bits of perishable jelly, stuck with seeming haste into an ultimately perishable socket; mere sensitive films of nature's photography, owing their very color to nature's whim—what right had they to speak, mysteriously to affright from mirrors, to haunt in the dark, to melt the will, to transmit the fires of one heart to another, as they have done since the dawning of intelligence?

Cara walked desperately over and faced the photograph, which Miss Armitage should not have hung there to torment her before her time. Tut! the old lady had not known she was coming.

"'What will you be?'" she repeated, defiantly. "A pretty decent sort of woman after all, my young friend! So don't look so scornful. 'What will happen?' Oh, things will just break up, all at once, and people will expect you to break with them. 'Why?' Because two people were selfish instead of one, which is the ideal arrangement. 'Where?' It depends upon box receipts, you stare-cat!" And with an angry wrench she twisted the wire so that the picture faced the wall.

Then she blew out the candle, before recollecting that she was but half-dressed. She did not care. She lay down as she was on the bed, and her own eyes stared out into the darkness, and in a few moments the other eyes stole out from behind the picture, as she had known they would, and tried to stare her down. And they were her own eyes, too. What nonsense! One becomes a new person every seven years—sooner, if one has a husband—and it was a farther cry than that for her—back to fifteen and girlhood.

"Yes!" she burst out, finally; "I know you look like Billy; I knew that

was what you were trying to say! But he chose to look more like his father, so I left him there. Heavens, what a hard bed! I won't stay in it."

She sprang up and felt with her hands for the cloak on the floor, then lay down with her face in its satin folds. She did not cry. She tossed and saw the eyes and felt the hardness of the floor. And the cloak had something on it; she could not rest her cheek there. Those clever eyes! Bertram Fanning, when wrapping this cloak about her, had drawn his hands over her shoulders more slowly and softly than there was need for, till they had almost met beneath her chin. And she had shaken them off, with the same restless gesture with which she had later rid herself of the cloak, but had not rebuked him, because he was writing a play which was to rebuild her fallen fortunes. There, eyes, you have the worst of it, and if you were fifteen years older you would know that there are worse worsts! She was no one's wife. But Mrs. Fanning was! Oh, unprofitable, unprofitable, all this threshing out of the day's problems in the night's silence! And her face burned, laid next that cloak. She rose and tried the bed again.

Every one sleeps, unless an Inquisition officer watches him. It would be untrue to say that an occasional blur of oblivion did not pass across Cara's unrested mind. But it was what the average unprincipled sufferer calls a sleepless night, or fragment of a night. With its first disappearance into dawn Cara was up, writing at the little spindle-legged escritoire close to the window.

As she flitted through the hall, looking like a gray ghost in a green cloak, she stopped at Miss Armitage's door and slipped the note where it would fall at the turning of the knob. She had written:

PATIENT MISS HELENA:

It almost makes me stay to say good-bye, to think how you will not blame me for not staying. But I cannot. I have a habit of leaving houses when they make me unhappy, and yours does, dear Miss Helena. If you had not put that stare-cat

child up on my wall I could have stayed to breakfast. But now I don't wish any breakfast. Do not worry about me, though. That play of Fanning's promises to be fine, and if I am successful I shall be all right, for you have probably discovered that I am

A CARA WITHOUT MUCH HEART.

VII

If "the inimitable Cara Melville," as Fanning fiercely but ineffectually called her day after day in the *Eagle's* dramatic column, had thought that by acting in this way she would forfeit the friendship of Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage she would have acted otherwise. But she reckoned with full knowledge of her hostess. True, Miss Armitage did not call again at the "plush place," so they missed meeting during the few days that remained of Cara's engagement in the city; but letters passed between them afterward, which was astonishing. That Cara should receive a wistful little Christian-spirited note in copper-plate handwriting was only to be expected, and had, in fact, been confidently banked on by that wayward but intelligent young person. But that Miss Armitage should receive from one city after another, as westward the tour of Cara took its way, long, slightly affectionate and highly amusing letters was one of the eternal surprises with which Cara enlivened her friend's existence; though, of course, if Cara wrote letters at all they would be good letters. Box receipts were rather better at Cleveland, she wrote blithely from that city. Oh, if Miss Armitage only knew the joys of acting! Why should she refuse, unswayable creature that she was, even the tempered bliss of seeing her friends act!

"Jessica," the play Fanning was writing for Cara, was really something remarkable, far better than one would have believed him capable of. The title character was one which it was foreordained she should interpret. Fanning was forwarding it to her in instalments, as fast as he could write

it. When it should be finished, good-bye to this ghastly business of amusing the unamusable. The season of Summer rest, which was close at hand, should see a Cara Melville rolled up in a brown cocoon of study, out of which she would emerge a brilliant marvel, with "Jessica" for wings.

So she wrote; but, instead, the warm weather saw her cruising on the coast of Maine in the yacht of a young society woman of the Blanche Armitage stamp, who had fallen under the spell of Cara-Melvillity, and her favor promised almost as much for Cara's future as did "Jessica." Miss Armitage was slightly disappointed. Nothing daunted by past rebuffs, she had asked Cara to spend the Summer with her at a watering-place.

Bertram Fanning was more than disappointed; he was savage. The Manner got permanently mislaid; he never took it home and now it could not be found at the office, save by utter strangers. About the only place where any of it was to be seen was in the Armitage house, where he was afraid to go without it. He visited there quite often—for society information, he said, which Miss Armitage gave him freely, though wishing he would not always lead up to Cara in that completely unmarried way; still, to be sure, he was writing a play with Cara as model, and what did she, Helena Armitage, understand?

And, as it happened, Cara did very well not to accept the invitation. For a ne'er-do-well cousin of Miss Armitage's, of a degree of removal which, though distant, was less distant than the other Armitages could wish, was ending a troublesome career in a troublesome way. A telegram notified his relatives that he had betaken himself to a New York hospital to die and wished some one of his own blood at hand to close his eyes. Miss Armitage was the only one who conceived it her duty to remain in town in order to be at hand whenever needed. Mrs. Athelstan Armitage said it was ridiculous, especially as the unpopular relative did not die, but lin-

gered from day to day, from week to week, wasting the time of his betters as he had wasted their money all his dawdling life. But Miss Armitage stayed cheerily on through the heat and proposed to remain even till September, when there would be a biennial convention of Daughters in the metropolis and she could entertain a number of delegates under her vine and fig-tree.

And so, one hot July day, Cara and her friend met on an elevated train, to their mutual surprise.

"You, Cara? I thought you were on a yacht?"

"Well, think so, then, my dear girl, if it pleases you to imagine the cool breezes fanning my brow, while the mint juleps—"

"Cara, you don't touch those things?"

"If you would let me finish—I was about to say that they were being used by the sailors to swab the decks. That yacht suits me very well, Miss Helena. You are the only person, I hope, who knows that I was set off at Kennebunkport and came here by rail. There are times when a yacht is a refuge from the stormy blast, even if you don't make it your eternal home."

Miss Armitage did not like to ask her not to use the language of hymns so carelessly. Cara did not look as though she would bear much interference. She confessed to worrying horribly about "Jessica."

"It is pure absurdity, I know," she said. "The thing is clever, but there are other plays; and there is always comedy left if I fail in the serious line—and there are even other actresses left if I die of heartbreak over the failure. And yet that is the way I feel—that I couldn't bear it if anything should prevent my creating that particular part in that particular play. I contributed so many suggestions to it, and it came like such a ray of hope at such a black time, that to lose it would be like losing another child. My career is the last thing I have left to lose."

Her friend glanced at her sympathetically and quickly moved her

narrow shoulders in an attempt to screen three people from Cara's sight. They were a mother and two children, who occupied a seat several spaces ahead, across the aisle. The maternal instinct was quiescent in Miss Armitage. Sentimentalists do not know that there are such women, until such assume—or, indeed, abandon—responsibilities like to Cara's. But each of these thinks she stands alone among her sex, and Miss Armitage clung tenaciously to an orthodox idea that the wolfish, unhappy look in her friend's eyes owed at least something to the children who had died, to the other one to whom she herself had died. This woman across the way had a boy, too, to awaken painful thoughts in Cara.

But Cara did not seem to mind. She bestowed a glance on the children now and then, but during most of the time closed her eyes in weariness. She was plainly very, very tired. Miss Armitage kept a wary eye on the children, fearful that they might become too noisy. They came very near it. The big boy had luggered the younger child, a tiny thing with a shrill laugh several times too loud for her diminutive body, up into his lap and was clapping her bits of hands inside his own, laughing very heartily. He was a nice boy, Miss Armitage conservatively admitted to herself. He had big, square teeth that showed constantly in a good-tempered smile, honest eyes and a manner that showed far more consideration and affection for a little sister than twelve-year-old boys are wont to display. There was something almost paternal, well-nigh pathetic, in the devotion with which he catered to her whims, bending his blond head, recently shaved so closely for Summer as to resemble a ball of plush, that she might claw all over it in disappointed search for a lock long enough to pull; cuddling her in the hollow of his arm and letting her "play go sleepy," laughing almost as sympathetically as the mother at her baby rages and reconciliations.

He was a nice boy in other ways, too. He picked up packages when his mother dropped them from her lap, a twentieth-century marvel; when, in crossing the aisle to help a young lady who was struggling with a window-blind, he stumbled over Miss Armitage's bag, which was projecting unlawfully, he said, politely, "Please excuse me, madam," and carefully put it next to its owner. His jacket brushed Cara's averted face. Miss Armitage did not understand these things, but she feared they might be painful. When the train next stopped she asked, "Would you like to change your seat, Cara?"

Cara looked up. "Why should I change my seat?" she queried, in surprise. And, after all, the children were leaving the train here—or, no, it was only the boy, who eagerly kissed the little girl good-bye, raised his cap to his mother, swung off the car and then, just before it started again, showed his round, dimpling, somewhat reddened face at the window. "Oh," he said, shyly, passing in a tight, grimy ball of something hurriedly drawn from a pocket, "would my gum-drops make your little girl very sick?" And he disappeared.

He nearly took Miss Armitage's eyes with him. "Then he isn't her son?" she exclaimed, finally, transferring her gaze to Cara.

"No," said Cara; "he's mine."
"What!"

"He was Billy," repeated Cara. She was very white. Miss Armitage secretly wondered if she could be mistaken. It seemed such an extraordinary thing to recognize one's child after six years. Suddenly she felt her hand gripped painfully hard.

"His little white head," Cara whispered; "just as it looked when he was a baby, on the ranch, before everything had changed. Miss Helena, isn't it strange that, no matter how busy you are, or how happy you are"—she did not look happy as she

said it—"you never get away from things like that?"

"I suppose not, dear. I did not know you felt so."

"I knew it," said Cara. "Oh, yes, I knew it, all right. But you can't ask many favors of a man you have struck in the face, and you can't go back and live with one you hate as the Almighty Himself hates sin," her voice growing deep and grating, "so there seemed no particularly easy way of my seeing Billy. Please let us stop talking of Billy! I know you care more for the Daughters."

VIII

BUT Miss Armitage did not cease thinking of Billy. It seemed part of her duty to Cara, for whom there was so little else that she could do, since that obstinate person would not come under her roof and sensibly save hotel bills while she studied "Jessica." And the end of her thought was a ring one day at a door-bell with "Melville" on it, a dignified inquiry for the master of the great, moribund-looking house, whose many closed windows and general exterior aspect somehow proclaimed its lack of a mistress, and the ushering of a somewhat frightened old lady in a muddy, bedraggled skirt into the drawing-room, where the son and heir of the house sat cross-legged on a satin sofa, with a book on his knees and a mucilage bottle at his side.

Vague as were Miss Armitage's data about children, she felt reasonably sure that they, especially boys, did not harmonize with satin sofas. How neglected this poor child must be!

"Good afternoon," said the poor child, politely, rising to push forward a chair. "It's hotter than Ecuador since the rain, isn't it? I was pasting in a stamp from Ecuador when you came and that made me think of it. Oh, jee-whitaker! that mucilage has done it again!" And with an awful handkerchief he dabbed at the

sticky stream trickling slowly down the slope of the sofa.

"Who will scold you for that?" inquired Miss Armitage, in her quick, sparrow-like way.

"Nobody, now. Grandma used to, but she's dead now," his bright, affectionate eyes filling suddenly with tears, "and papa will never know it. He's very absorbed, but he's beginning now to bring me stamps from the office. Do you collect stamps and have you duplicates you don't want? or postmarks? I collect them, too."

"Why, no; but I have a cousin who is a missionary in Mombasa. I might write to him to send me some stamps from there."

"That would be almost too splendid," said the boy, smiling like Cara. How could Cara say he resembled any one else? "You can buy stamps, but you can't buy postmarks. I'm so glad you came to see us. Shall I tell papa you are here?"

"Yes. Give him my card and say that I am a friend of your mother's."

The boy turned back from the door. With a brush of his arm he shut it and came close to her. "Do you know my mother?" he asked, breathlessly. All the heart-hunger of a lonely child, which a more experienced observer would have read in his actions toward the woman and baby in the train, had leaped up into his face: "Oh, I am so very glad you came to see us! I don't meet any people who know her and she never comes here at all. I've seen her, though!"

"You have seen her?" exclaimed Miss Armitage.

"Why, yes. She is an actress, you know. Anybody can pay to see her. Papa was angry that I knew it. But how could I help but see her name on posters all around? So—I had a nurse I could do anything with and I made her take me, twice. Papa doesn't know that. I dived under the seats every time I saw a man with a beard like his. I think mamma is lovely, though the nurse

said I would not know her off the stage. How queer that you should know her!"

Oh, Cara, Cara, Cara! A moment's spasm of intense anger contracted Miss Armitage's heart and drew it worlds away, sympathetically speaking, from her whose shameful impatience, whose light repudiation of solemn pledges, whose cheap craving for adulation and the whirl of the senses had left herself only a legend in this boy's life, to be stubbornly cherished with the secret devotion with which childish loyalty always invests a parent little heard of. See now what ruin, Cara Melville! However brilliant your smile, or fascinating your personality, you have robbed a child!

As quickly as an exhalation, however, Miss Armitage's momentary wrath was gone. She asked to see Mr. Melville, and the boy clattered before her up-stairs to the library. It was a beautiful house, she noticed, with Cara's taste—the taste of six years back—still eloquent in all the none-too-well-dusted furnishings.

A large man, with one of those heavily bearded faces whose expression is inaccessible, rose when she entered the library, but kept his thumb in his book. There is said to be character in thumbs. In the thumb retained in the book there certainly was. With one hand he brushed his brow, as though conscious that the frown of the disturbed man was still there. So, this was Cara's "stone!"

"Papa, this lady is Miss Helena Virginia Gerv—Guv—" stumbling over the name; "anyway, she has a card." Then, though she was a friend of his mother's, he left the room. His grandmother had evidently brought him up very well.

"A friend of Cara's," supplemented the lady.

"Did she send you here?" demanded the man.

"Cara?" shocked. "Oh, no; she never dreamed of such a thing!"

"Then why did you?" abruptly. "Pardon my shortness, but I will discuss my private affairs with nobody.

There have been a great many like you—" which showed how little he knew—"who have come to try to reconcile us. But I will talk with none of them."

"Oh, you quite misunderstand me!" —hands and eyes oscillating with earnestness. "I have no such desire. On the contrary, now I have met you, I am convinced that you and Cara never were meant for each other. But I have been thinking that there was something I could do for her, now that she is so downhearted and discouraged, and at the same time for you, to whom, as her husband, and not, of course, treated altogether properly by her, I owe something. I thought that, if you liked, I would take the—your son for a short visit." She considered Billy a rowdy name and did not like to pronounce it. "I owe something to him, too."

William Melville's expression was not quite so inaccessible. "My son?" he slowly repeated. "What would you do with him?"

"I do not wholly know, I'm sure," a little faintly. "I am not accustomed to children and not very fond of them; but I suppose I should get used to it. He is not very noisy, is he?"

Melville looked her up and down. She had stirred the stone with the most irresistible of emotions—surprise. "This is really very extraordinary," he said, brusquely. "In what way would you be assisting me by taking from me the last thing I have left to care for?"

"Oh, excuse me! Cara said you didn't care, or I would not have presumed. I only thought how lonely he must be. In my house he would at least have a woman's oversight. He needs it," with a thought of the mulcilage on the sofa.

The man made no answer. At first he knit his brows and surveyed Miss Armitage, while Miss Armitage surveyed him. "And she could come and see him," he said, finally, "if she cares to see him—to her heart's content."

"She does care," replied his visitor,

simply. "She is his mother, you know."

"She has made no attempt to see him in six years," said Melville, whose expression had gone back into his beard.

"But it was because she hated you so," Miss Armitage apologized, "if you will pardon my mentioning such a thing. Of course, you have the right to refuse to let her see him. I know very little about men, but I am told they are very unforgiving when a woman has once done anything."

"When she has carried one's name all over two continents on bill-boards," said Melville; he spoke very slowly, as though the words were being torn bit by bit from an angry mind; his eyes had at last lighted up; "when she has given the right—since you talk of rights—to every man, woman and, in these precocious days, child, to peer and examine and speculate about her virtue; when she has left her child to the mercies of a man whom she herself has said she cared nothing for; when she dissolved, in an instant, the ties of eight years without an explaining word, with a public scandal, with the deepest insult a man can deal a man, and capped it with the deepest insult a woman can deal a man!" The voice from the stone startled Miss Armitage; it was like the hollow tones of Memnon speaking.

"Without a word, I tell you, either before or after!" he continued, furiously. "Why do I tell you? Oh, well, I might as well go on, and you can return and give her the satisfaction of knowing that the spot she struck burns yet." Miss Armitage's imagination saw the sinister outlines of a hand in the red that rose at the man's thought. "If I had committed some unconscious crime, could she not have told me? If she had suddenly lost her mind, had I not a right to know it? Or, if there was some other man—do you think it is pleasant to wonder if there was some other man?"

"I should think that impossible," spoke Cara's friend, thoughtfully. "But, then, I knew Cara before you

did. It was undoubtedly very wrong for her to withhold her reasons when you asked her."

Melville did not look at his visitor. "I did not ask her. She struck me in the face. Let her explain why she did it."

Miss Armitage gazed at him with a sudden instinctive compassion for the helplessness of selfishness. "Don't you know?" she asked, half-doubting. He made a negative gesture. "I can tell you!"

Melville continued to look at her. "Then tell me," he said.

She did tell him—simply, serenely, fully, drawing from the storehouse of a fatally circumstantial memory nearly every word which had passed between Cara and herself. The stabbing eyes of the Cara on the wall were not omitted; the passion of hatred that woke at his name was not slurred over; she even betrayed poor Billy's secret of the stolen glimpses of his lost mother. Into her mind any idea of treachery in so doing did not once enter. As for the man, it is difficult to feel one has no right to hear information which closely concerns one's self. So he listened, and even under the thick beard Miss Armitage saw him grow red, then white.

He did not interrupt her once while she talked, nor did he at first speak when she had finished. He sat staring somberly before him—so long that Billy, thinking the guest must have gone, came and opened the door. His father shook his head, and the boy ran away. But this made a break, and Melville began to defend himself, in the short, torn sentences with which he was wont to express himself.

"I thought I was giving her what she wanted and had been deprived of for so long. I laid no hindrance on her enjoyment of all the gaiety her heart could wish. I let her alone in every way."

"And caring so much for her society, too," commented Miss Armitage, sympathetically. "Every one finds Cara so droll and bright a com-

panion. She did not understand the sacrifice, I fear."

Those prehensile eyes of hers seemed to seize on truth and drag it out to light, willy nilly. "Well, I was preoccupied," he admitted, gruffly. "I had a new business to establish, and—I did not like New York very well after the ranch, and—I see now that I did not talk very much, or appear to notice Billy as much as I perhaps should have done. The fact is, when I saw that white head of his I was as apt as not to remember that there had been two brown ones, too—the children we lost looked like Cara—and, somehow, I could not speak. That thing had hit us both hard. But Cara seemed dancing it off."

"Pity you could not do so, too, wasn't it?" He looked startled, but she continued, briskly: "I know very little about it, naturally, but I should suppose that the good Lord who took them would prefer that to your home being broken up. But, of course, no one could help it. Cara is as she is—all life, all expression—and I suppose it was that very vivacity which tired you. I myself am disturbed by the animation of—" She was about to add "children," but thought of Billy.

Melville had been pulling at his beard. "You both seem very sure I was tired of her," he said, sullenly. Perhaps Socrates was the only man who, placed on his self-defense, presented a sublime spectacle. The feat is not easy. "I was tired," he burst out, before she could answer. "That comes as one grows older. The glaze going off everything, the drying of all the juices of hope in one, the disappointments and cares of life—how can one help growing gray and heavy in the soul as in the body?"

"I have the Daughters," said Miss Armitage. "They are a great resource. Of course, you do not have anything like that to take you out of yourself. It is very unfortunate, but no one's fault." She rose to go, convinced that there was nothing to be gained and guiltily relieved that

there was not. The virginal quiet of her household was not to be disturbed by the alarming clatter of a boy! "I am sorry you will not let me take—William," she said.

"I did not say you could not. But I doubt whether he would go. Billy!" opening the door. "Billy," as the child came stamping, more noisily than Miss Armitage's worst fears, down the parquetted hall, "you would not care, would you, to make a short visit at this lady's house?"

Billy's eyes brightened. "I think I should," he said, with decision. "She's got a cousin who's a missionary in Mombasa, and I'd get the stamps." "I can buy you stamps, child. Think, there are no other boys there!"

"But it would be somewhere different," said the twelve-year-old.

His father's lip curled a little. "Like," he murmured, "like——"

Cara's friend turned on him with lightning quickness. Her miniature furies were as disconcerting as would be the sudden belligerency of a humming-bird. "Don't dare to say that!" she panted. "No one has a right to judge any one else. I am a friend of Cara's, and shall always proclaim it."

"Yes," chimed in Billy, "she is a friend of mamma's. Papa, do let me go."

"Please yourself, then," said Melville. He did not say it quickly.

IX

"CARA, your boy is here."

Miss Armitage had been practising the words ever since Billy's advent, rolling them like a morsel of sweetness under her tongue. But, now that Cara, who, she had thought, would never come, had at last appeared, they trembled in the speaking. She pushed her friend into a room where a mucilaginous Billy unsuspectingly brooded over the stamp album. She did not stay to see, or hear. She did not think it would be nice. She even mounted up to the third story, so as not to hear the mother's sobs. If

such there should be—and she was by no means sure that anything could make Cara cry—she knew Cara would not wish them to be heard.

There was plenty to do up-stairs. An intriguing fellow-clubwoman had written to suggest that she, Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage, signify her willingness to represent the Daughters at the coming convention, if enough members could be found to desert to her standard from that of a personally unpopular but duly appointed delegate. This Miss Armitage did not think a suitable subject for one of her bubbles of wrath. She merely wrote the misguided member a letter of great mildness and length, pointing out that she, Miss Armitage, was not fitted to represent a fly. It was an engrossing letter and she was genuinely surprised when a servant hunted her out to announce dinner.

Billy must be fed, of course. Miss Armitage had a vague impression that something happened immediately to a boy left hungry. So, she dropped her pen and went down to her guests. No, Cara had not cried. Her pale face had the soft, shining newness of expression one sees in that of a girl to whom love—welcome love—has just been declared. Billy, with his white head hugged up tightly against her and with his gummy hands besmearing her gown, was tranquilly explaining to her the intricacies of the stamp album spread out over her knees. He did not look hungry. Miss Armitage stole out of the room, but Cara sprang up, with a mighty scattering of stamps, and ran out after her in the hall. "You—you—you—" she was almost sobbing now—"you friend! How did you do it? What did he—the other—say?"

"Only things to pain you, Cara. The moment I saw him I knew that all you said was true. He apologized, however, for having tired of you. He said he could not help it."

Cara bit her lip. "With what other observations," she asked, coldly, "did he favor you?"

"He spoke of your leaving your child with a man who cared nothing for him—" Cara made a passionate, unintelligible exclamation—"and—and your dancing, and said I could tell you that the insult burned yet. He seemed quite bitter, Cara. I wish it had been otherwise."

"To what end?" asked Cara, quickly. "I would play every part on the stage and off before that of the repentant wife. There is yet plenty of good, juicy corn inside the husks for me!"

Corn suggested dinner. It was charming of Cara to come out and sit at the table, with Billy's head still on her shoulder, both of them accepting, praising everything, but too excited to eat. "May I come every day?" she asked wistfully, when the shadows sent her home.

"If you do not, my dear, you will deal me the last shock," was the somewhat unexpected reply.

Every day Cara came—and Miss Armitage never stayed in the room. She even shyly turned her back when Billy came racketing down the long stairs, three at a time, to spring on his mother's neck and kiss her. But Cara said very little—unless, indeed, to Billy. Miss Armitage began slowly to surmise that in the union of two undemonstrative natures there had been no strength.

Billy's visit, however, was to be a brief one. Within less than two weeks Miss Armitage received a telegram from Billy's father, which she was obliged to show to Cara.

Coming to-morrow, take Billy, leaving town.
MELVILLE.

"Hooray!" shouted Billy, who had read it over his mother's shoulder. Cara started as though she had been struck. "Do you want to leave me?" she asked.

"No, no," said the boy, miserably; "I was just excited to think of going somewhere, that's all. Won't I see you again, mother? But, you know, I haven't seen father for two weeks, and I've lots of new stamps to show him. He's all the father I've got."

Cara rose to the occasion with real

sweetness. "I have earned this," she said, quietly, to Miss Armitage. Common sense had been one of Cara's prevailing characteristics even when sixteen. "I am only an episode—perhaps it is as well that I should last no longer. I shall write him letters when I star all round the world in 'Jessica,' and he will at least prize the stamps." She embraced the old lady with unusual affection and she did not break down over Billy. It was good, thought her friend, that she had "Jessica" left her.

Those were days of telegrams—a product of civilization which never failed to produce agitation in the breast of Miss Armitage. While she waited with Billy for Mr. Melville to arrive, another "yellow peril" was handed her. This fulfilled the dread primal purpose of telegrams. It told her that some one was dying—the cousin in the hospital.

"I shall be there immediately," said Miss Armitage, fluttering. "No; I must wait, because I must receive a gentleman who is to call. Oh, dear, what shall I do?"

She compromised, waiting an hour longer. Mr. Melville did not come, and might not come for hours, since he had set no time in his telegram. And the soul and body on which the name of Armitage had been wasted were quietly slipping away from each other in the hospital. It must not be. Miss Armitage shook hands with Billy—she shrank from kissing boys—left numerous apologies, explanations, compliments of the season and other amenities in his charge for safe delivery to his father, and went to the hospital.

The cousin clutched her hand. He was too far gone to speak. Blood faintly touched with blood in that instant of supreme loneliness, and it was worth a Summer's waiting. Miss Armitage sat without unclasping her hand long after she knew her cousin was dead. All the Melvilles in the world of struggle faded from her mind in that hour's contact with the world of peace.

The hansom waiting before her door on her return recalled them, and she hurried into the house, pleased to be able to perform the duties of a hostess in spite of all. "So Mr. Melville has come?" she said to the servant.

"No'm; Mrs. Melville." The girl spoke with traces of excitement. "From the way things look, I think she's goin' away with Mr. Billy in the carriage."

The girl dived down to the kitchen with a breathless bulletin for the cook. "She gave me one snub with those eyes of hern, but I noticed she was up-stairs as quick as sixteen. Come up softly and open the stair door, and you'll hear everything they say."

What they heard first was Miss Armitage's voice, not angry, but eager, emphatic, as was its wont, even in times of peace.

"No, Cara; there is no use in attempting this. You shall not take the boy away. Billy—" in her excitement she called him that—"go out into the hall and sit on your valise again!"

Cara's reply was so inaudible that the listeners ground their teeth.

"No, Cara; he is not yours. Excuse my mentioning it, but you once abandoned him of your own free will. Cara, Cara, don't weep! you distract me, and you do not shake me. You shall not take him from this house, unless it is over my dead body!" The earnest sentences rang out clear as the ring of a true dollar on the testing hearth. The watchers below could not see how she put out her frail sticks of arms to span and block the passageway, as though she expected personal violence. Billy, too, began crying to her.

"It is of no use," she answered him, as though he were grown up. "I am your mother's friend and always shall be, but your father intrusted you to me, and I shall give you back into his hands and no others." She wished for Isabel, to explain to Cara how unswayable she was.

"I want my child," said the other woman, softly. "I want my child!"

Cara stood quite still, as if expect-

ing that she need say no more. She had said it as women say things on the stage, making other women weep. Yet how she meant it!

"No," said her friend.

There was a sound. Both the eaves-droppers felt sure the mother had dropped on her knees. Billy cried noisily.

"Bill—William, go back and sit on your valise," said Miss Armitage, breathlessly. "Cara, do you mind accompanying me down-stairs?"

Miss Armitage touched Cara's arm, and the mother, yielding to the gentle gesture, went with her down the stairs, to the street door, which Miss Armitage herself opened.

A moment later the door closed, softly.

X

CARA, quite motionless, remained outside the door, with her body crowded close against it, nearly effaced in its shadow. Nearer than this, she knew, she would never again approach to Billy. Shielded by the dusk, she bent her head to let a few drops fall on the stone step. Hers was not a passionate nature; but the fuse, hard to light, burned implacably in the hidden chambers of her heart.

A man dashed around the corner—a man without many minutes' margin for the train he must make after leaving the Armitage residence with his son—his only son. Cara knew him at once. She had not looked on his face for six years, nor he on hers. There was full time for her to slip down the steps and escape him, but in the stupidity of panic the thought did not occur to her. Instead, she crushed herself more closely back into the shadow, trembling, to her own acute vexation, watching him with that brooding, mordant hatred, so strange to men, felt by a woman for a person she has once loved. With it, of course, she felt a throb—the aching of the lost relation, like pain in a member long ago condemned, cut off, buried—

utterly beyond recall or wish of recall.

He rushed up the steps and rang the bell before he saw her, and then started back, as he had done once at a blow on the cheek. Well, William Melville, is the face of your wife a basilisk? Say something, man, that she may sting you with contemptuous silence; but say nothing gentle, nothing in the tone of old days, lest in her craving loneliness she clutch at a hollow truce, the false and feeble and unutterably pathetic hope of reestablishing an edifice destroyed! It would be impossible to let such a moment pass without speaking at all!

Impossible, perhaps, to a man keenly sensitive to woman's influence. The servant had opened the door and the light streamed out on the man's face, blotting the woman's, in the covert of the door, into more impenetrable shadow. His look was grave, searching, stubbornly secretive of emotion—the look, not of the husband for the wife, but of the man for the woman, which is quite different. It put an ocean between them—that deep, cold counter-current of sex antagonism, which underlies the warm surface ripple of sex attraction and into which the latter indeed sometimes merges itself when the noon-day sun removes. Then, raising his hat, the man passed into the house, where the welcome of its hostess awaited him, the demonstrative affection of his son, *his* son—leaving his wife without a word, to crouch condemned out in the darkness, like a wailing virgin in the parable. How did he know she had a home to go to? or, rather, did he not know she had none?

"You cold and selfish man!" she suddenly called after him, her voice breaking with its weight of aversion. Then she hurried down the steps to the cab, which had all the time been patiently waiting.

The cunning of fate is the cunning of a child. The smallest baby knows by some intuitive power when there is trouble, distraction, anything abnormal, in the home atmosphere,

and with apparent malice adds its cries to the turmoil or seizes the moment for some infantine *coup* it has long been meditating.

As Cara sprang from the cab on reaching the hotel, eager to hide her face—for a few more tears had fallen on the way—she learned that there was a caller to be seen. She frowned at the name, but did not dare to frown at the man when, a few minutes later, she swept in to see him, her face now rehabilitated in composure and her body arrayed, as ever, in a beautiful gown. What has ever befriended a woman as has her gown? The singular hypnotic effect made on the minds of others by a few yards of silk or satin swathed in a certain manner about these, our frail bodies, is one of invulnerability to all shafts. You cannot snub a woman thus clothed. You cannot think of her as otherwise than insolently happy, any more than you can dream that the lighted homes you see from the dark streets below can shelter cares like yours.

"How is it you are here?" Cara cried. "Has anything happened to 'Jessica'? Do you know, we shall make something great of that, together?"

"I am glad of it," said Fanning, with a little of The Manner. "I like to do things—together. Did you bring the manuscript with you?"

She nodded, and handed it to him. He brushed the folded sheets out smoothly on his knee. "Is this the only copy you have?" he inquired.

She nodded again.

"Can't you speak to me?" he exclaimed, fretfully, as we address those who belong to us. "If you appreciate the play so much, you might appreciate the man who wrote it. You went, or pretended to go, on that yachting cruise just to deceive and escape me."

"Such nonsense!" said Cara, vaguely. It was an un-Cara-like remark, and she felt it. She rose and, rather hoarsely humming a flippant little tune, went to a table by the window. On it stood a neglected-looking globe

of dingy greenish water, languidly circumnavigated by three moribund gold-fish. She had not chosen an expensive hotel this time. While she hummed, she broke a cracker lying on a plate beside the globe and fed the crumbs to the fish. But one cannot escape atmospheres by merely turning one's back, above all, by turning it on a man who rises and follows. His face was almost over her shoulder—shining almost greenish-pale on its long, thin neck, which jerked convulsively—looking queerly like the bald pod of a blown dandelion on its attenuated stem.

"What do you want?" she asked, quickly stepping back.

"The old thing," he answered, still more quickly. "What Howell Grannis wanted, what they all wanted. No! you need not tell me you sent him back to England. I know it. He talked to me before he went. I know you send them all somewhere. You shall not send me anywhere, though I, too, want it. Cara! are you not almost ready to give it to some one?"

"Perhaps," she answered—his face moved still nearer, hers was turned—"you offer no reasons or inducements, however, that it should be you to whom I give it."

"If I have not offered them," he said, passionately, "it is because you have employed every means, human or divine or diabolical, to keep me from offering them. Offer! Do I not offer you all I have or am likely to have in the world, and count it nothing in comparison with your love? Listen, Cara; you have heard plenty of such talk, have you not?"

"Oh, dear, yes," she said, with that wonderful woman's lightness which a pitying God added just before He sent out a thing so weak to strive with things so strong. "It's a cuckoo-song. And worth about as much."

"Very well. But tell me something more. Are you likely to hear so much of it in future? Nothing succeeds like success, Cara! But I—loved you in your failure."

"Yes," she said, "you did."

The weariness in her eyes lifted a moment. The buried ashes of one who has done creative work would stir under the foot of him who, however unworthy in other ways, had intelligently appraised—which means praised—that work. The man caught at the propitious moment.

"I would love you," he cried, "if all the world should hiss you down!"

"You would need to," she said, with the slowness of one who is thinking out her words. "All the world would do so—if I let you love me."

"But *you* don't care what people think. You have already defied them once, to do what it pleased you to do."

"Yes," she admitted. She sank her chin on her hand and studied him—his long, strong form, trembling with agitation, his craving eyes, which could not leave her face. She could almost see his heart heaving under her gaze. After all, hearts were hearts. "Still—I think it would be best to be sensible, Fanning," she said, in a low voice.

He sprang up as at a signal. "That's the best word from you yet," he said, coming so close in his height and strength that Cara, herself a tall woman, had the feeling of suffocation, helplessness, of the wayfarer in a tiny street half-closed by beetling buildings. "To be sensible means to take love when we can get it and to be mighty thankful for it, Cara. Oh, Cara, I love you—I love you dreadfully, against a lot of prejudices I had formed, against your adamantine pride and self-sufficiency——"

"Against all right and justice," she interrupted.

"Never mind about that. We are not in the infant school, learning lies from chalked texts, of snakes rising from the wine-glass. It's the empty heart where the worm crawls, Cara, and I'll venture you know it! We are a robust man and a living woman, with red blood in our veins to feed and with work to do. What strength for yours or mine is going to come from gnawing husks?"

"About as much as from eating deadly nightshade," said Cara. She said it so quietly that he pressed even nearer. He had seen many women, after fencing, yield to many men—on the stage, which chalks up lies co-equally with the infant school. But she shook her head. "Enough of this," she said, sharply, since saying it gently seemed ineffectual. Women are always slow in learning some things. "Are pride and self-sufficiency the only words you can use—the only words you can understand for my attitude toward you and a horde of jackals like you?" A small speck of scarlet began to swim before her eyes. "Did you never hear of virtue? Don't you know a good woman when you meet her?"

"When I meet her," he said, deliberately; "but I seldom do."

Cara's eyes swept him up and down, with actual wonder in them. He stared sleekly back at her, with the last shred of The Manner cast from him, naked and not ashamed, gleaming in his hard cleverness as gleams the dead moon, with sheer inability to absorb the light pouring around him to the quickening of one atom of that stark, unfertile surface. Self-proclaimed a good woman, self-accused, Cara nourished with anguish a thousand gnawing doubts of it. Stained and despairing men had stumbled around her in the pits of bohemia, yet, holding ever above their sinking heads some last treasure of belief in something—a white womanhood, a loyal manhood, a pure Godhead—dying, if they died, with eyes fixed glassily on the fading yet ineffable beauty of an ideal. But here was one for whom the doubt, the struggle, the aspiration simply were not.

"I did not know your *soul* was bald too," she said. "I could not love you, even if I were not married."

"Why, you don't consider yourself married, do you?" he asked, insolently.

Cara could redden. She felt a sudden thankfulness for it. "Perhaps not," she said; "but you are."

"I don't care if I am," said Fanning.

"What right have you to talk? You set the fashion for this sort of thing. I married too young. My wife and I are not congenial. We are not living together now, if that fact has any weight with you."

She uttered an involuntary exclamation.

"I don't care," he repeated. "She will get used to it. I'm providing for her properly. It's all her fault, anyhow. She never took any interest in my interests. She would not read a book. She never looked at what I wrote. She just sank her life in vulgar, trifling cares."

"Two wrongs do not make a right."

"You seemed to think so," retorted Fanning. The brute beneath the polish—the ape within the man—was each instant more apparent. "You seem also to forget, my dear, that you are talking to the author of 'Jessica.' Do you imagine that I am going to give you everything—even the intellectual flower of my life, the best I ever did or am likely to do—and receive nothing in return but reviling?"

Cara's hand had been clenched. It dropped loosely at her side. She absolutely had not thought of this. Fortunately, she could always speak quietly. "Is that your trump card?" she asked.

"Yes," he said, boldly; "it is."

"You have no right! You wrote it for me, you promised it to me. And I promised to share the receipts. Everything was fair and square." She put her hand up to her eyes. Stricken hopes were reeling about her.

"You'll have to promise more than that, Cara Melville. I may have no right, but I have possession." He twisted the manuscript brutally as he spoke, having drawn it from his pocket. "I'll give it to no other woman," he burst out. He did love her. "I'll tear it to pieces—burn it—I don't know what I'll do with it, or myself or you, if you defy me this way."

"Make up your mind about it," said Cara. Her teeth were chattering. "I defy you! I want you to think of the meanness and cruelty of this,

however. You know I banked my last hopes here."

Fanning did not reply. With sullen, watching eyes he slowly tore the thick manuscript in half; the ruffled, swishing sound agonized them both. He lighted a match. She sobbed and put out a hand to stay him as he crossed to the empty fireplace. It was impossible not to believe it one of his poses. "Your future!" she cried. "In selfishness, if in nothing else, stop."

"I don't care," repeated the man, violently. He threw lighted match and manuscript together into the fireplace, where, because it was "Jessica," they entered into instant relations. "There is one more copy," he almost whispered—"mine, at home. Cara, for one kiss——"

"Give it to your wife," said Cara, shortly; "play, kiss, everything. I would not touch you to gain paradise."

There was a sharp interjection, a sudden forward-flinging movement of his body, the flash under her eyes of a glittering-white cuff with dazzling diamonds in it, all mingling so unexpectedly with the red cloud which was slowly rising about them, that for a moment she thought he was going to shoot her. She struggled back, not from the muzzle of a revolver, but from the frantic clutch of Fanning's hands upon her arm. He had seized it as if it were a detached thing, was pressing it defiantly to his heart, pushing up the soft lace of the elbow sleeves to cover it with quick, furious kisses, knowing that she would never lift her hand against another man.

But the strength of revulsion was in her. In a moment she was away from him, plunging the profaned arm again and again into the stagnant water of the aquarium beside her, which seemed a pure fountain by comparison with what had last touched it. Again and again she wiped wet arm and dripping sleeve on the silken folds of her gown hastily returning the profaned arm to the water, hurling words at him through the crimson cloud of anger which seemed to get into her throat like a fog.

"You men!" she cried, stopping to clasp her wet hands in intensity; "what do you not do! Oh, how I hate you! Oh, I am not strong enough to hold the hate I feel for you! I look strong, but I am not, or I would scorn you more!" She was sobbing in her wrath.

He looked up, startled, at her—a woman of splendid emotions, and now tremulous as a tinted leaf skimming in an Autumn wind—and realized what a tragic actress was here, lost to him and "Jessica."

"You cause our griefs, our pains, our mistakes, and taunt us with them," she went on. "You talk of loving us, but you will joyfully ruin us. You boast yourselves above the savage in honoring us, but it is only when some other man stands between us and your insults. You swear to cherish us, but do it only so long as it is easy. Then you leave us, in body or in spirit, or both."

Woman's jealousy for woman, even stronger, because nobler, than her jealousy of woman, throbbed fiercely through Cara at the thought of the wife forsaken for her—lonely, wondering, sobbing, or perhaps stunned into dry grief—did not she, Cara Melville, know what it was? "Oh!" she cried, "what do we not suffer through you! And you—we cannot make you feel!"

"Cara," said Fanning, with eyes aflame, "I feel. I—"

Cara firmly crossed the room and touched the bell. She wondered that she had not thought of this before. Instantly there was a sharp responsive buzz. By the time the servant had answered it, to be sent about some trivial commission, Cara was alone—with the ashes of "Jessica," with the ashes of everything. The soaked carpet at her feet, the streaked and spattered garment that hung limp and ludicrous about her knees, were only symbolic of a world where what was not burned was spilled, and what was not spilled was ruined.

She felt suddenly that, as she had said, she was not strong. She felt

that she was going to die. But it should not be with her head in the ashes. The ranch was left—the ranch to which she had bought her ticket, and Billy's, too—the pity of it!—in that mad moment of planning a thing whose iniquity now struck her. She knew there would be no trouble about staying there. They had sold it to friends—in the days when it had been "they"—who, she had seen by the papers, were in Europe. No angel with the fiery sword there! Only peace, and gentle remembrance of her first and only home, before Will had changed and Billy grown and the two little mounds had been raised under the tiny wisps of trees. Back to Eden, Cara! but quickly, lest you find your garden trodden, your roof broken, the grass too tall over your first lover's head; for leave even Eden too long deserted, and its very site is lost upon the earth.

XI

IN defiance of all progress, which would not be so bad if it were not in defiance of inevitability, what the human heart most consumingly desires is a return, not an advance. One of the greatest religions the world has ever produced beckons through its promise of a return to what we first sprang from, though that be Nothingness; one of the greatest novels of modern times fascinates through its visions, not of some wonderful beyond-life, but of the recovered grace of a day that is dead, as the goal of "dreaming true." The old home, though humble; the old friendship, though worn past all sweetness or serviceability—to these we creep, the spirit too faint for farther flights, when the stones of this world have broken our wings.

As the western express whirled Cara across states, as unconcernedly as a boy steps from one ant-hill to another, she sat and trembled all the way. It seemed impossible that something would not prevent her from

reaching the ranch. There would be an accident—and her life-loving body, its notion of dying already forgotten, recoiled terribly from the idea of being killed. Or, this train would not connect with Orion Station—and for the thousandth time she nervously consulted her time-table. Or, when she reached Orion, she would find the house burned down. Or, at best and least, the Mortons, who had bought it, would have had the unparalleled presumption to paint it, add porches and balconies, alter the interior—oh, horrible!—improve the grounds, perhaps, past recognition.

It would have been a different journey if Billy had accompanied her; Billy, whom she had excited with the promise of revisiting the home of his babyhood, already a paradise in his memory, so sorrowfully older had even Billy grown! Well, there were two little graves on the place. Of these Will Melville could not rob her, if she could only reach them.

It suited her excellently that she should approach Orion Station close upon dusk. She had also provided herself with a thick veil. Country people have acute memories, and her face had appeared in the newspapers many, many times since this was her home. She was not afraid of the lonely road to the house. Twice she had ridden it, once walked it, with her frightened baby's voice wailing forlornly after her, to fetch the doctor while Will lay ill. As she had said, one never gets away from such things.

She did not need to walk it, however, for now there was an omnibus running on the highway to and from the station. Time does not stand still in the West. She asked the driver to set her down near the Melville ranch.

"There ain't such a place," he said. She started. "Oh, you mean the Morton ranch! Used to be owned by parties named Melville—now I remember. Well, you strike out toward your right—I swan, she knows!"

She knew. The roof showed in

the starlight. And the grass grew long and neglected, almost to the eaves, an illusion of the distance. It was almost impossible for her to admit to herself the feelings with which she drew near to the house. So silent, so dark, so peaceful, so pitying, it stood with its long wings on either hand extended like shadowy arms of welcome—which in a flash, and by a flash, were blotted out, even as the thought came. A sudden illumination leaped out from one of the windows like a triumphal signal of fate, and never light appeared less kindly than did those rays to Cara Melville.

What did they mean? Perhaps tramps or robbers were in insolent possession. She crept closer to the window—that of the eating and living room, the first in which she had been wont to kindle a light. If they saw her thus spying they might kill her. This idea of being killed kept alternately thrilling, then repelling her, as with most unhappy people whose minds are practical. Nonsense! the Mortons had other friends who had taken the house for a week's or a Summer's camping. She crouched under the vine-hung window, wondering whether they would grudge her a moment's glance into her home. A voice arrested her. It was that of her husband, unheard for so long.

"Billy," it said, "where is the cup?"

"Broken," said Billy, gaily. "What are boys for? We can drink from soup-plates till the things come." Then they both laughed. Cara raised her head and saw them sitting at the table where she used to sit with them.

She did not look at the room, after all. Into every crack and cranny of its plank walls some bit of her own personality had slipped. On her knees, homely scrubbing-brush in hand, she had made the floors shine with cleanliness. The cupboard in the west corner was something she had knocked together herself, being a good carpenter for a woman in her days of success. On the door-jambs

should be two notches, not very far from the floor, proudly cut to mark the heights of two little heads that now were laid low. But she did not look at the room.

"This has been the dream of my life," murmured Billy, maturely, through mouthfuls of food, up-rolling rapt eyes, with fine, bold markings of splashed gravy under them. Will Melville was looking directly into them, where he must each moment see her, as she had seen and yearned toward him, with mingled love and hate in her heart, each rendered intolerable by the presence of the other. "But I'm going out in the morning to cut the high grass. Folks might hide in it."

Yes—his mother might. She might do this, after traveling two-thirds of a continent to find a haven. A trouble of rage filled her soul—not red, like her anger against Fanning and, aforetime, against her husband—but black and sad, like the darkness into which she was thrust. Had not this man enough in life, without barring her from the graves of her dead children, from the lintel over which she had passed, a happy bride? The worst of it all was that every time he turned his face—the face she had struck away from her—in the wonted way in the wonted place, it seemed good to see it. To think that when a small child she had solemnly stared up and down the pages of the garden story, searching for the curse in the pronouncement, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband!"

Her desire was to him, though he talked on in that even, emotionless voice to Billy for an hour—less, more, she was not counting time—while she pressed her thrilling body closer to the sill, her face against the vines, sending her very breath as a silent summons into the room—but he did not mention her name. "Your mother did this, said this, was this—" how did the words keep from slipping out, in such surroundings? Did not a woman, on the whole, deserve this much from the father of her child?

"Yes, I know how to cook," he answered Billy's question, and did not say who taught him. "Yes, son, it is a cunning little cupboard," and did not say who had built it. Neither God nor man had decreed in that garden story, "Thy desire shall be to thy wife."

Slowly, as she listened, with the chill weight of the night-dews dragging at her heart through the medium of her garments, Cara Melville bowed herself on the sill—almost into the room, with safety, for the lamp, man-filled, had gone out—and surrendered herself to the still eloquence of the inevitable. One cannot live so many years as she, even living far more foolishly, without having certain hard bits of logic bruised into one's heart. In this man's life she had become a dead issue, through his own fault and wish, as well as hers. Had it been only hers, she could have done something; had he wished his pardon, she could have asked for hers. One can forgive people for doing things; one cannot forgive them for being the people who do them. She had no doubt, knowing his character in all its intricacies as she did, that if she appeared to him this moment as a suppliant he would take her back. But back to what? She had run away once from all he had left to offer her. Let what is broken, so remain, Cara; the mill never grinds again with the water that has passed; times change, and we with them. Oh, there are a thousand proverbs, but not one of them to heal a woman's breaking heart!

If he should come to the doorway—near which he must feel her presence; why, a deaf man could hear her heart beating against the house—and once call "Cara!" or even speak of her to their child, the whole face of the facts would, of course, alter. She pressed patiently to the window-frame, waiting to hear if he would. Another hour or æon passed between talk and silence, until the drowsy Billy was sent clattering up the stairs to bed; and then, at last, he did come

to the doorway, for the master's last survey before closing for the night.

Cara's breath stopped. Now was her moment, her opportune moment. Any sensible human being—even the inexperienced Miss Armitage, even the light, yet hard-headed Rose Riter—would have told her that not to speak now, when fate had flung the pair into each other's path with such obvious intention, would be suicidal. But people usually do suicidal things, pricked nervously on by the very consciousness of their folly, a consciousness which would make the unpardonable sin, were its character known, more common among us than petty larceny.

William Melville looked fixedly ahead of him over the dark billows of grass. One glance to his left and he could not have helped but see a woman's motionless figure crouched up against the window. That glance must decide it—she would not ask that he should call her name, for, after all, the night was dark and she was far from home, and her desire wailed out to him. Instead, he looked to the right; then, without a word of soliloquy or a sigh, he went inside and closed the door—barred it, she hearing him. For him, perhaps, it was not the suicidal thing.

After all, it had not been so many hours, even counting the long walk back to the station in the darkness—she was too unhappy to be afraid—for when she reached the waiting-room with its big clock she found the night express due in a few minutes. She had spent very nearly the last of her money and had traveled from New York to Colorado, to stay over between trains. As she traveled from Colorado to New York, she tried for a while to form plans of campaign against the frowning future; but, at last, despair seized upon her. The world—God, if He were God at all—must take care of a woman so wretched, so tragically checkmated in all efforts, so bound to do things suicidal.

It was not until the cabman, on her arrival in the huge New York station,

whirring with noise, asked, "Where to?" as she paused with her foot on the step, that she decided anything. Then she gave him a house number with the utmost composure.

"Folks ain't home, I guess," he said, as he helped her to alight, peering over his shoulder at the shrouded windows.

"Is Mr. Melville in?" demanded Cara, sharply, of the slatternly-dressed maid who opened the door. She had never seen Cara before. "No one met me at the station. Has the baggage I sent ahead been delivered?"

"Ma'am?" stammered the girl.

"Call the man-servant, please, to help the cabman with the trunk," continued Cara, imperiously. "Is Mr. Melville here or at the office? I sent my telegram there."

"Mr. Melville is in Colorado, with Mr. Billy. He's been there some time, and will be there some time. If ye telegrafted to the office he wouldn't get it."

Cara looked startled. "Oh, well," as though recovering herself, "I will stay until he returns. Where is the man-servant? Surely, you are not the only person in the house?"

The girl reddened. "The—the butler's on his vacation, ma'am," she quavered.

Cara looked her up and down. "That seems strange," she remarked, "in a house like this, with so many valuable things in it. I shall mention it when I write to Mr. Melville."

"He'll be back by the time the master is," said the damsel, palpitating. "Did ye come to stay, ma'am? What name, could I ask?"

"Mrs. Melville," said Cara. How natural it sounded here! She was safely in the hallway by this time.

Mary Reilly gazed at her suspiciously. "There ain't any Mrs. Melville," she said.

Cara laughed. "You have not been here long," she said—a perfectly safe statement in New York. "Did you never hear them speak of Mrs. Charlemagne Melville?" Small blame to her if she had not. "You can telegraph to Mr. Melville, if you like, to identify

me. Meantime, please get me a cup of tea. I have been traveling for hours."

A pitiful, harmless little revenge this might be; but Cara's eyes lighted excitedly as she glanced around at the four walls of the castle she had captured by boldness. This would teach Will Melville to take her old home, which could do him no good, and the graves of her weanling lambs—her mind harked back to that—and keep her out in the damp and the dew, when by calling her name once—Enough of that! Legally, she had still every right here. He himself could only turn her out by meeting her, and that he would not do.

Mary, climbing the stairs with the cup of tea, was filled with forebodings; she determined to send a warning letter to Mr. Melville at Orion Station, Colorado—she wished it came easier to her to hold the pen. She found Cara with her hand on the knob of the room that had been hers.

"Ye can't get in there," the maid said. "He kapes that room locked."

"The key is in the door," returned Cara, and Mary saw that it was. On a worn little silver ring it had long jingled in whatever queer woman's receptacle Cara kept her keys, drawing rust to itself. She slipped in and hurriedly shut the door on Mary's peering eyes, and, it seemed, upon her own, for the room had the darkness of death. Every shutter drawn and dust triumphant, she could feel it smearing her groping fingers; she choked as she drew it into her lungs.

Nothing touched or cared for! The light she let in from a hastily opened shutter showed her the gown she had thrown across the footboard of the bed—nay, the very dent she had made sitting on its side. She deliberately went to the other side and made another dent; she took up the gown—queer, dowdy thing now—and more dust fell from its folds.

A horror like Rip Van Winkle's seized Cara. The dust on the floor, which had wonderfully sifted in through closed windows and doors,

after the manner of dust, had probably not been disturbed save by her own intruding foot. Yes, it had; for across the floor lay a direct path of footmarks—a man's—pointing both ways, mingling confusedly under light accretions of fresh dust. They began at the locked door of the room communicating, which used to be, and perhaps still was, her husband's, and they led over to the dressing-table. Cara picked her way, setting her feet carefully in the same marks. Was it not irony? For a moment—between a past and a future of separation—their feet walked the same path. On the dressing-table, pinned to the cushion, was a slip of paper. What was this? She had left him no note on the cushion. The writing on the paper was Will's and consisted merely of a date, "April 29, 1894."

Cara was not likely to forget that date. But to see it on that bit of paper, already yellowing at the edges, moved her strangely. Had it, then, meant anything to Will Melville? Out of her conviction that the day she left him would be to him little different from other days, save for a certain stinging of the cheek, a tingle of hurt pride, had come her leaving. The written line is so very live. In that arbitrary collection of characters, none too legible, the touch of a vanished hand survived. Taken together with the footmarks, it was a shock. It is always a shock to hear a voice, a step, in the house of death. Cara softly closed up the room, went into the library, threw herself on the couch and covered her eyes.

Later in the afternoon she heard Mary Reilly at the telephone, shouting stentorian secrets, in the misplaced confidence of the ignorant, who find it hard to realize that what they say is not as private as what they hear. "O'Ryan Station, yis!" Mary screamed. "Now ye're sure ye'll sind it right on to the telegraft place? Say, 'there's a lady come to stay in the house, that says she's one of the family, name Mrs. Melville. Mebbe she's all right, but I niver heard tell of her

before, and I thought ye ought to know. Very respectfully, Mary Reilly.' This is lots better than doin' your own spellin'," she confided to the operator. "Now, connect me with the police station." Cara listened with half a smile to the message she sent to that centre of suspicion. She just wanted an eye kept on the house, that was all, being as she was the only servant in it, the butler being on a little vacation, though "ye needn't mention it to the master, for he'll be back before they get home. And a strange lady that said she was one of the family, but whom Mr. Melville never told her to expect—" here followed the substance of what she had said in the telegram.

"Perhaps ye'll be writing him that ye're here?" inquired Mary, when she served a solitary dinner. "If ye plaise, don't say anythin' about Martin bein' away. 'Tis his mother died, and the master's that tender-hearted, as ye perhaps know, he'd be grievin' for Martin."

The emphasis lay on the word "perhaps." Another half of a smile broke the melancholy of Cara's expression. So the unauthorized absence of a servant, which his colleague dreaded to have reported, was all that forced Mary to believe in Mrs. Charlemagne Melville—nay, even to permit her presence in the house. As it was, Cara, somehow, feared to leave it. It was becoming an old instead of a new experience, this having doors shut in one's face. And Mary, too, feared to leave, though taking some comfort in the fact that no denial of the identity of his guest reached her from Melville. Was there not valuable silver in the safe? might not this odd-mannered, imperious visitor be in league with a band of burglars? In a spirit of mutual distrust the two women moved about the great, lonely house, addressing each other with the lowered, watching eye, the tone of assumed indifference. Cara heard Mary giving her marketing orders over the telephone; she

heard the patrolman's steps more frequently about the house at night than when she had lived there before. She, in turn, scarcely dared go out to post a letter, still less to intrust it to Mary's hands, which was one of her excuses for not writing to Miss Armittage. Whether she had come here in a spirit of retaliation or for a shelter—sometimes she said to herself it was for one, sometimes for the other—for either she was paying in coin of excruciating bitterness. Ghosts lined themselves up against the walls and gibbered at her. The garden, of which once she had been so proud, for its size made it a rare luxury in New York—now she did not dare to set foot in it, or even look at it.

One day something set her wondering why that path to the dressing-table had been made. Only one line was written on the paper—whose yellowness and the rust of the pin that held it were proof that it had been there a long time; yet here were marks of repeated passings to and fro. She opened the drawer, full of a tumble of old ribbons and laces—reminiscent of old festivities. It made her sick to see them. On the top lay half a dozen unopened letters addressed to herself in varying handwritings—letters from desultory correspondents, which she saw by the postmarks had come after she had gone and before the whole world knew it. How curious to put them here, as though he had expected her to come back!

She did not open them. She did, however, lift the flap of a long, unaddressed envelope in another corner of the large, untidy drawer. The color left her face suddenly and entirely, in the manner of the day in the car when her boy's jacket had brushed her face. White, shining, and curly as a bunch of shavings, but soft as only God can make a baby's hair, the locks lay in her hand.

"Billy's curls!" she murmured. He had worn them when she left him. So young and helpless was he when she left him! And, after all, Will had remembered that she had kept snip-

pings of the red-brown curls of the other two, and had been sure she would want these also; sure she would come back and want them!

Her shaking fingers touched something else under the mass of oddments—a small, square box, wrapped in what had been jewelers' fine white paper, but now discolored. Portions of the seal crumbled away at her touch. It, too, bore a date—"June 30, 1894." She was not likely to forget that day, either. Even Will had always remembered to come out of his fog of indifference long enough to buy some trinket commemorative of their wedding-day. Other boxes lay near it—why! the whole drawer seemed full of them, but on actual count they resolved themselves to six. Of varying shapes and sizes, one for each year of her absence, indorsed each with the date of the anniversary, they lay there waiting for her, symbols not only of faith extraordinary, but of the pathetic perversity of human affection, which neglects not to pay tithes like these of mint, anise and cummin, while neglecting weightier matters of the law. Even a stranger could very nearly have wept at the thought of it. Will had nursed the hope of her return at the same breast with a vicious pride born into the world to prevent it!

Well, she had returned now. Why not open the boxes? Any curiosity as to their contents did not touch her. The surface woman in her had always loved these little outward adornments; but pain had left very little of the surface. All she cared to do was to stare dumbly at them. They gave their message too late, after she had tried unrighteously to rob him of the child she had unrighteously left to him; after she had broken the silence of six years with words of bitterness; after she had seized his own house from him! What is there base in the quickness of the human heart to be won with gifts? Even the Almighty, we are taught, could think of no better way

to reclaim man than by an Unspeakable Gift. For behind the thing given lies the thought. Given, not taken—and she replaced the boxes. Mary, loyally spying at the key-hole, saw her stoop too low to be seen, and naturally never imagined her lying prone on the floor in a sudden rush of grief, with her lips pressed to the marks of her husband's feet. In that one moment things Cara had thought she could never forgive or forget were forgotten—one does not forgive.

When she rose, the dust he had trodden lay grotesquely smeared on her wet cheek, but she did not know it. Very shrunken and old she felt herself as she crept to her desk, unable longer to endure alone this house of ghosts, and wrote an appealing letter to her one unalienated, because unalienable, friend. She had seen by the papers that the Daughters were in busy session in the city; but if Miss Helena Virginia Gouverneur Armitage were to fail her, the pin that held the bottom of the world in place would suddenly give way.

Mary, at first, demurred at going out to post the letter. Her throat was sore, she said. Perhaps it was, with bellowing over the well-used telephone. It summoned her again after she had reluctantly left the house with the letter, and Cara, wickedly wondering if the police were inquiring after the movements of Mary's jailer-prisoner, answered it. At the voice which reached her over the wire the receiver nearly dropped from her hand.

"Hello! I say again! Is that Mary?"

"Hello!" evasively retorted Cara's trembling voice, which she was sure she herself would not have recognized.

"Is that you, Mary? Everything all right? Nothing happened since I left?" A certain telegraph company was still searching for an "O'Ryan Station," to which should have been delivered a tramp message two weeks ago, but only the telegraph company knew it. "I got back last night, but stopped at a hotel with Mr. Billy,

knowing you would want to fix up the house. I'll be home to dinner at six."

"Oh!" said the other end of the circuit, involuntarily.

"Hey? You're not Mary! Who is it?" with an agitated sharpness.

"It's—it's Cara, Will." The click of the replaced receiver acted as a period. Cara stood with hands pressed tightly on her ears to drown a recall message. He could not, should not answer, "Then I will not come!"

Mary, returning from her flying trip to the post-box, was stunned to find her guest in the kitchen, wearing one of her—Mary's—white aprons, and with cheeks flushed from poking at her—Mary's—fire. "I've ordered a chicken for to-night, Mary," she said, breathlessly. "Mr. Melville will be home to dinner, and I am going to cook it myself for him—an old-fashioned chicken-pie, such as he loves. You can go out, if you like."

"The divile I'll go out!" muttered Mary, with simple eloquence and heartfelt sincerity, backing into the butler's pantry. This was the strangest proceeding of all.

"Have you sent for Martin?" inquired Cara, feeling an impulse to laugh—no, to break into a gale; to sing, dance, whirl dervish-like about the kitchen.

This brought Mary to a state of anxious civility—this, and the reflection that the lady did not seem exactly afraid of the master's return. The lady was too happy to make the handmaiden unhappy, however. They grew to be friends—fast, warm, almost hilarious friends—in that hour and a half of excited rushing about the kitchen, Cara with her hands deep in dough, which she would not let the other woman touch.

"Take off those stuffed olives," she commanded. "He hates the peppers. Get the other kind. Why do you talk about an egg for clearing the coffee? He likes it made the French way. It is time I—" she checked herself. "No, indeed, I will make it, myself. Oh, I, forgot—set another place; no, I'll set it. A lady is coming, too."

Her heart had formed a habit of reverence at the thought of Miss Armittage. She scarcely minded the thought of the lady's presence to-night. The whole world might come, if only Will would come. Surely, Will would come!

The pie, the work of her scarcely responsible hands, approached accomplishment in the oven. To the end of her days she never knew exactly what she had put in it. The table was set and waiting for the master. Cara also waited in the library, neither she nor the contagiously excited Mary noting that she still wore the white apron. But the library clock was so fast that, to avoid unnecessary apprehension, she went and waited in the reception-room. Here, too, the clock was outrageously fast—it ticked fifteen, twenty, even thirty minutes after six, with a fiendish rapidity that yet could not keep up with the pulsations of her own heart, which, at a quarter to seven, began to beat up around her ears—we all know the sensation. Angrily, she crossed to a room where there was no clock, to undergo another wretched half-hour of waiting. Had *he* so waited for her, year by year, until tired of it?

"It's a crisp, ma'am," said the disappointed Mary, suddenly materializing in the doorway. "I've took it out of the oven. And the olives is swimmin' away in the melted ice. It's long after seven. D'ye think he'll come?"

Cara eyed her. "No," she said, in a strange voice, "I do not think he will." Then, before the servant, she threw her apron over her head, following the mysterious elemental impulse of stricken womankind, and began to rock herself back and forth, "keening" like any Mary or her foremothers. "He will not come!" she wailed. "Mary, go away, for he will not come!"

Almost antiphonally the always startling sound of an electric doorbell smote their ears. "Ye're wrong, thin!" shrieked Mary, who understood more with each moment and flung herself down-stairs. But Cara was quicker to open the door to a drive of

rain and a little wet wisp of a woman, who enveloped her in her dripping arms.

"I would not let him in, Cara!" she gasped, triumphant. "Don't have the slightest fear, dear child. It took me half an hour on the step, both of us drenched in the rain, to convince him that I wouldn't. 'It may be your house,' I said, 'but Cara has made it her last refuge and you shall not come in and make her miserable. She has told me she hates you and will not wish to see you. On that point I am firm.' I watched him carefully out of sight, Cara!"

XII

HALF the world does not know how it mortally offends the other half, and awaits the Judgment Day in an appalling purity of conscience. All Melville's sense of any loss was at first swallowed up in amazement of anger, un pierced by any ray of light on a subject for whose explanation unutterable dolts of friends came to him in malignant droves. He had loved Cara "all right," as she had said of him. He had provided well for her and her child. So well had he loved and provided, so immaculately acted, that it must surely be to-day, or at latest to-morrow, that she would be coming back to offer excuses, which must be valid to have been so tremendously operative. Therefore, he went out and bought the wedding-present when the anniversaries came around. So immaculately had he acted, so well provided and loved, that only the most criminally sentimental could expect him to make overtures for her return.

Then she had gone on the stage. A man's wife may parade herself in social publicity before thousands, without its stinging as does her appearance before hundreds who pay her for it. It stings even when the man does not love her. The sense of ownership is strong as death and cruel as the grave. Only the records of the Searcher of Hearts could reveal whether at this period William

Melville loved his wife, either in his own way or any other way.

He remained stunned, for, to quote again from Cara in her own defense, he "felt things, all right." It was no great awakening when he began to give Billy more attention than before. It was not because he felt that he had half-neglected the boy. It was simply because the boy seemed to him more attractive than before. Most minds work in that way. Then, one day, came to him a most singular old lady and she stunned him afresh, just as he was recovering from the other blow.

"Everything I do is laid to me," wept the ill-used little girl in the tale, without an idea that the whole world travails and groaneth together in the pain of the same cry. Will Melville echoed it more or less faintly, with more or less sincerity, until another cry echoed more loudly, sending, scourging him more than half across America to escape it or to come face to face with her who uttered it—whose retreating form in the flying cab he could not have pursued had he wished. And, again, unless the Searcher of Hearts troubles His books with tragic entries of the agonies, follies, approaches, withdrawals, repentances of good as well as of evil, in the man-and-woman relation of millions of bubbles like us, no one could say what Melville wished.

"You cold and selfish man!"

It was one thing to hear Cara quoted as saying it; another to hear her say it when he was looking in her eyes, for the first time in years, waiting for some word of relenting. It rang in his ears all the way to Colorado; it was to Colorado instead of somewhere else because the weeping Billy had declared his mother was "going to the ranch." And one night, tired of waiting to hear her come up and knock at the door, he had gone out to the doorstep and looked wistfully out on the road, and would have been so glad to see her coming from afar off!

"You cold and selfish man!" "It's Cara, Will!" These were the two sentences, ridiculously telescoped into each

other, like trains run from opposite starting-points on the same road. They were the only two sentences he had received from her since she had left him, and now they summoned him to discover which of the two she meant. The old lady had said things, repeated things—which made him wonder, after all, whether Cara did hate him. But on the very threshold of his own house this old woman had again met him and stopped him, with arms passionately outstretched, and told him, with the greatest circumstantiality and plainness, that Cara did.

"It is of no use," Miss Armitage had declared, with the utmost positiveness. "You may have the legal right to come and drive her out—"

"But, my dear madam, I would not drive her out!"

"What would you do?" she had inquired, unanswerably.

"Ask her to—stay," he blurted out, desperately. She repeated that to Cara a day or two after, triumphantly adding the answer she gave him:

"I will not permit her to be so annoyed. Her heart is broken, and she sent for me. I am an old friend of Cara's. It is of no use to talk."

From a point out of sight to Miss Armitage's forward-poised eyes, that yet wore glasses for near-sightedness, he long watched the windows of Cara's house, as she had watched the lighting in Colorado of his, until—"Move on!" said a gruff, suspicious voice at his elbow—a patrolman's.

Yet, he moved not only on but back, the next night and yet the next, still watching and still watched, drawn by the thousand cords of the most inexplicably tenacious of human relations, so easy to strain, so hard to break. Each night he stayed longer.

The fourth night he made up his mind again to try the house. Surely, the old lady slept sometimes. He waited for the lights to twinkle out; but one, which he settled on as hers, stayed stubbornly awake. One—two o'clock passed before the light was suddenly extinguished. He waited for a few

moments, then sprang up the steps, took out his latchkey before he remembered he must ring the bell, and—had the door surprisingly opened in his face by a woman—a woman with a haggard face, a small bag in one thin, trembling hand, a smaller purse in the other. It was Cara, who had always had the habit of leaving houses when they were no longer tolerable. She had left a remorseful note for the deserted guest, sleeping in peaceful unconsciousness in the third story.

The recognition was instant.

"We seem to meet on doorsteps," he said, in a low voice.

She fell, rather than bent, toward him, all the strength gone out of limb and heart and hate.

And in the very moment a dark shape, her pursuing fate that took Proteus forms, rose to forbid. It was only the familiar, barrel-outlined figure in the brass-buttoned coat and helmet of the law, which she had watched with a morbid, homesick terror from the window; but it lunged forward, with a haste which meant suspicion, from a bank of shadow on the curb, and was making for the steps as though to halt them. There was no time for saying anything pleading, or reproachful, or magnanimous, or dramatic; no time for fumbling among piteous precedents as to which had the better right to fling open that door and invite the other in. It was Cara who clutched her husband's arm in a paroxysm of fear and pulled him in through the doorway.

"Quick!" she said, wildly. "Come in, oh, come in!" It seemed scarcely possible that the door closed with noisy security on them both, and that they were standing together on its right side, at last face to face with each other—and with an immense awkwardness, the product of crude emotion awed by its own strength.

"Don't tremble so," Melville—as if he himself were not trembling—said in the low voice which was all he had. "What could he do to us?"

"Arrest me," whispered Cara. "He

thinks I am a thief. He has been watching me. And there would have been publicity—" she shuddered, she who had had enough of publicity—"and—a patrol-wagon, perhaps, and a night in a cell." She continued to tremble at the thought of it.

"Well, I would have been in it, too. He has been watching *me* very suspiciously."

"But it wouldn't even have been the same cell," she said, involuntarily.

Her husband took a step forward. "Would you wish it to be?" he breathed.

She did not answer. With the realization that he was actually there, that he was speaking to her, not coldly or selfishly, that he seemed interested in her wishes, rose the wayward instinct of fencing.

She, who a moment since could have thrown herself on the stone step at his feet for letting her hear his voice, its every familiar accent tied to some long-stilled heart-string, now felt a rallying reaction of pride, a confused determination that he should not take her back for pity. It would have been all so different if that tentative half-embrace on the doorstep could have been finished. Instead, "What a gloom!" she said, nervously, and reached overhead to the chandelier in the dusky hall.

"Let me," he said. Their fingers met at the key and came down together, shyly, stiffly touching. In the new illumination they stood, absurdly at arm's length, yet woodenly holding hands like the stupidest of country lovers, lapped in a wave of shyness which grew each moment less painful and more delicious. With the pressure of the other's hand that increased, nay, clung, more with every instant, each felt the other's life quietly returning into his own. Will Melville tried to speak, knowing there had been too few words in the past. But the wanness of her cheeks, the dark pathos of her eyes, choked him with their mute speech of what might have been the harrying of the

wolf of want itself, for all he had helped. He hid his face from it—against hers, fairly cold with weeping. "Cara!" he murmured, "we would want it to be the same cell, would we not?"

"Oh, yes," she said; "oh, yes, yes!" throwing from her, as quickly as she had formed it, the impulse to hedge with him as with Fanning and his kind, and abandoning herself to his embrace. "It hurt me most!" she whispered. "I struck your face—" as if he did not know it! "It was a dreadful thing."

"Never mind," contritely; "women forgive men more than that every day."

"And I tried to steal Billy. Oh, Billy!" They both started at his name. "Where is Billy?" she demanded.

"Still at the hotel, no doubt crying for his father, poor chap!"

"Only for his father?" wincing.

There was no reply.

"Does he never cry for me?" asked Cara, entreatingly.

"At the first—" began her husband, slowly. "Why, Cara! oh, my girl, don't, don't!" For the sobs that began to shake her body, the tears that began to splash on her heaving breast and on the hands locked closely together, were to the ordinary easy grief of the emotional woman as some seismic convulsion of a writhing continent to a tiny ebullient well.

"Oh, he—Mary—they were right," she wept, incoherently. The more she strove for self-control the more she gasped, the more the tears streamed. "I am a thief! I robbed Billy—you—myself."

They clung together—he, with no trace about him now of a stone, trying to stop the torrent of her tears, both trying to outdo each other in repents, self-accusations. "We are both so undemonstrative," Cara whispered, brokenly. Yet they did not seem so.

"I wanted you all along," he insisted.

"We won't say much about that," said Cara, a little quickly. "It would be like my saying I was sorry all along. I must learn wool-brokering," she added, later, with a touch of the long-eclipsed quality of Cara-Melvillity.

"I don't know but you must, to hold down the business while I go to dancing-school." And then they both laughed aloud with tremulous amusement at the mere idea of it.

A quick, squirrel-like patter sounded over their heads, on the landing, two tiers above. "Cara!" came a voice down the stairway, whose unwonted illumination might well bewilder newly-awakened eyes. "Is it possible you are there, dearest child?"

"Yes, Miss Helena!"

"And," wonderingly, "you are all right?"

Cara looked at her husband. Impulsively both bent forward, and they kissed. The moment had almost the freshness and the dazzlement of first love. Each flashed into the other's eyes the adoring, self-abasing, apprehensive tenderness, the passionate humility, of the forgiven penitent prostrate at the altar.

"Oh, I am very, very all right!" Cara called up the staircase, joyously.

"Oh, very well, dear. I had an

absurd, nervous idea that I heard a man's voice."

"So you did!" shouted the man. "Come down, Miss Armitage. How glad she will be!" he added. "Do you know, I pinned my hopes to her? not realizing that she was so unyielding in her friendships. When she first came I hoped—as I did with them all, Cara—that you had sent her. I let Billy go to her only because I thought it might somehow bring some word from you."

But Miss Armitage was rather less glad than scandalized, partly at being called into the presence of a man in her pin-striped flannel gown, partly at the turn of affairs themselves.

"I would not dream of interfering, Cara, dear," she said, withdrawing the gown to a shaded corner of the hall. "I wish only your happiness. But I had thought you were peculiarly unsuited to each other. I did everything I could think of," almost dejectedly, "to keep this from happening."

"Don't reproach yourself," said Melville, heartily. "You very nearly succeeded. Come out, Miss Armitage, and let me hug you. Cara has not a friend like you in the world!"

But the alarmed upward scamper of a pair of straw-slipped feet—and the beating of their own hearts—was all the sound they heard.



NOT THAT VARIETY

SALLY GAY—Mercy sakes! Miss Linger Long engaged to Jack Whoopler? Why, she told me only yesterday that she wouldn't marry the best man on earth!

DOLLY SWIFT—She isn't going to.



A CONCLUSION

DE STYLE—There were eight hundred killed in the Philippines.
GUNBUSTA—I didn't know they had automobiles out there.

THE HYPHENATED AMERICAN

A WONDERFUL power has the hyphen small,
Like a chain-shot fired at the social wall;
For nothing and nothing make all-in-all,
When you join the two with a hyphen.

You don't need money, you don't need sense,
To be a person of consequence;
You go to the top of the tallest fence
If you spell your name with a hyphen.

Now Brown is a man you may neglect,
And Jones is held in no more respect;
But Brown-Jones stands among the elect,
For he spells his name with a hyphen.

And when he takes as his lawful mate
Miss Robinson-Smith, it is safe to state
That the Robinson-Smith-Brown-Joneses are *great*,
In a double degree of hyphen.

Oh, the one-em dash hath a virtue bold
More potent than pedigree or gold
For making the newest of families old—
The all-ennobling hyphen!

JAMES JEFFREY ROCHE.



A FINE PROSPECT

FIRST SUMMER GIRL—Does it make you think what might be to look at
the man in the moon?

Second SUMMER GIRL—Yes, coupled with the fact that there's a ring
around the moon.



NATURALLY

CORA—That chorus girl seemed rather embarrassed while in bathing.

MERRITT—You see, she's not accustomed to wearing such a scanty costume.



GENIUS often dwindles to an immense capacity for taking gains.

THE SHINING GLOSS

By Gertrude Lynch

“**S**HE is so beautiful that I can not tell whether I adore her or hate her.”

This was the conversational glove thrown into the arena by Mrs. Campan, as she leaned forward and helped herself to a salted nut.

“Well, I don’t mind saying,” was Mrs. Byrd’s comment, “that my feelings have changed; at one time they were those of a connoisseur who looks at a celebrated masterpiece in silent and respectful awe, and they would have remained so forever, but, in an unguarded moment, she gave one glance at my Edward and he has never been the same man since.”

Mrs. Byrd bowed, in response to her hostess’s pantomime, and passed her cup for the third time.

“I think she is rather self-conscious,” commented Miss Carey, a spinster of a certain age. The tone was slightly interrogative.

“Not a bit,” said the hostess; “not a bit! If I were asked at this moment to name the woman of my acquaintance who worries the least about looks, I should say, without hesitation, Clare Porter.”

Mrs. Weymouth passed the sugar to her right-hand neighbor, then went on: “Why should she? It is only the beauty which is uncertain that is self-absorbed. You don’t suppose if the Venus of Milo came to life she would wonder if her hat were becoming, or if she were the belle, *par excellence*, on any special occasion. Of course not; she would know. Perfection is never thus worried; if it were, it would not be perfection. Clare Porter, I would wager, spends

less thought and time on her appearance than any one here.”

Mrs. Vail was fond of epigrams—not fond enough, however, to keep them to herself.

“Perfect knowledge casteth out egotism, you mean.” She refreshed herself with a champagne wafer.

“It is wonderful how she keeps her youth,” sighed Maud Fleming, a débutante and toast of ten years ago.

“Beauty,” said Mrs. Vail, sententiously, “has no age.”

Mrs. Hastings swept a clear place for her elbow on the tiny tea-table. “I don’t agree with you at all—not at all.”

Mrs. Hastings was the president of a woman’s club; her intonations were those of one used to quelling incipient insubordination.

“Clare Porter is, I believe, generally admitted to be a beautiful woman; she is not my style—” this with a deprecatory glance—“but far be it from me to oppose public opinion on that point. The minority are not always wrong, but they might just as well be for any good it does them to be right. However, I shall permit myself to say that, if you think Clare Porter doesn’t know she is beautiful, doesn’t think about it all the time and doesn’t dream about it nights, you are talking nonsense. I believe, if any one should dare as much as to hint to her that she was growing old, it would almost kill her.”

“You know her—well?” It was Mrs. Weymouth who asked.

“Well? I should say so; we were children together.” Mrs. Hastings had forgotten, apparently, that they were

children of a widely different growth. "She was a pretty child, a pretty girl, and now she is a pretty woman—pretty, nothing more, according to my idea. She has been surrounded by an atmosphere of adoration from the time she could talk. It is the fashion to extol her looks. Take this half-hour, for example; here we are, spending our few minutes in a futile discussion of the supremely important question as to whether Clare Porter thinks she is beautiful. If she goes to a dinner, people forget to converse while they look at her; if she appears at a reception, other women might as well go home. I should not be surprised if societies were formed to discuss which is the most becoming color she can wear; in fact, not so very long ago, I saw two women get red and angry because one thought Clare more stunning in rose and the other inclined to heliotrope."

Mrs. Campan looked analytical. "So you think that her apparent indifference is assumed; that at heart she is vain and selfish?"

"Well," Mrs. Hastings said, after a moment, "of course, that is putting it rather harshly. 'Vain and selfish'—I should not like to apply those adjectives; but I repeat what I said before, that I think it would break her heart to be told by any one that she was not holding her own with Father Time."

"Nonsense!" and Mrs. Byrd took up the ball; "Clare Porter wouldn't care a rap. I think the novelty of it would amuse her. She must be deadly tired of being told she is beautiful; think of the horrible ennui of having every human being, from the time one can understand, telling one how lovely one is. Of course, she would regret it if she were pock-marked or hurt in an accident, but she is only human in that—plain as I am, I should hate to lose what few good looks I have; so should we all. No; I believe, as Mrs. Weymouth says, that there is not one of us here who is not vainer of her special attraction, hair, teeth, complexion, figure—whatever

it may be—than Clare is of her whole splendid self."

Mrs. Hastings was obstinate. She believed in her own infallibility, but, too, she wanted to convince others.

"What do you think?" she questioned of Mark Vane, the one man in the party.

He had been listening with an inscrutable expression on his face. "I could not think of acting as a committee of arbitration in such a delicate matter."

"But you have an opinion, at least," said Mrs. Hastings, bluntly.

"Yes, I have an opinion," he ventured, with slight hesitation.

"And it is——?"

"That with a little feminine tergiversation you can prove yourselves right or wrong."

"How?"

The question came from as many different directions as the wind in a gale.

"Oh, in a hundred ways."

"And one of them is——?"

He clicked his teaspoon against the saucer while he gave himself a moment's time.

"Well, supposing the next time you meet, instead of rushing toward her with all sorts of sugared flatteries on your lips, you treat her to a little feminine criticism—not so much that it will be marked, something tactful and suggestive rather than pronounced. You know the way your sex has. You don't say, 'What a bad hat!' but, 'Have you changed your milliner, dear?' Not, 'You weren't looking well at Mrs. Given's soirée,' but, 'Were you at Mrs. Given's? Oh, yes, so you were; I had forgotten—so you were. Wasn't Miss Dey a dream?' Oh, you all know! The idea of a mere man like myself assuming the importance of a teacher to post-graduates!"

"It would be rather amusing," said Mrs. Byrd, as she sat forward in her chair, "just, of course, as a study of character—the modern failing."

"Yes," said Mrs. Campan, "we

must impale our dearest ones on the pin of our researches. Truth at any cost, if your friend pays for the treat."

Mrs. Vail had a New England conscience, which obtruded itself at the most undesirable times. "Would it be quite right to her?"

Mrs. Byrd nodded, with a twinkle in her eyes. "It would be a good joke, and Clare is really such a dear she will enjoy it the most of any of us when we tell her. Of course, we will tell her?" she asked, looking straight at Mrs. Hastings.

"Of course," that lady answered, "but she won't think it a joke." Mrs. Hastings was waving her colors frantically, now that she saw help in the offing.

Mrs. Campan suddenly remembered a later engagement. She rose and shook out her chiffons. "This sounds like a plot, doesn't it? I hope I sha'n't forget; I am so used to telling Clare that she looks like an angel that I believe my tongue says it unconsciously. I'll practice when I get home. 'Clare, my dear child, do bant—that waist-line is just a little—'"

They all laughed, but not as one laughs at novelty.

Mrs. Campan turned at the door. "Do the schemers report progress?"

Mrs. Weymouth checked the rising tumult of departure. "Come in next Thursday—no, a week from Thursday. I'll ask her to meet us then; we'll tell her the whole thing."

"Tell her what?" asked Mrs. Vail; "that we didn't know whether she was vain or not?"

"Oh, no; just that we had a little curiosity to see how she would stand the delicate amenities that other women suffer from all their lives. Wasn't that the idea, Mr. Vane?"

Mr. Vane was standing erect and expressionless. "Perfectly, as I understand it."

"Clare will enjoy it, you may be sure," was Mrs. Byrd's last shot. "She's no fool, if she is beautiful."

Clare Porter had suffered to the

extreme from all those sorrows that fall to the lot of exceptionally beautiful women. In her girlhood she had enjoyed the sensation of knowing that she was the focus of admiration in whatever circle she moved. She had loved the adulation of the mob, no less than the creed that her most heinous errors against sense and judgment would be regarded leniently by the mere force of Greek classicism and properly rounded curves. She lived thoughtlessly, content with the surface, neither fearing nor heeding the depth, until the years of womanhood, with their fruition of promise, when she was forced to the knowledge of the terrible penalty that nature exacts for any exception from its normal rule.

"One must suffer," says the French proverb, "in order to be beautiful." After she had passed her twenty-fifth year, Clare Porter would have expressed it, "One must suffer if one is beautiful." The pin-pricks of envy, hatred and uncharitableness were directed toward her, and it is only in the Litany that these words are innocuous.

The training of a varied social experience gave her power to conceal these hurts, as well as the sensitiveness of a highly strung temperament and the craving for affection for herself—the inner, not the outer woman.

In her school and college days she was the idol of enthusiastic companions, who enshrined and then worshiped her with all the super-abundant vitality of their untrained emotions. The friendships of later years were more reserved, although sometimes their expression simulated the earlier ones. In these, admiration of her personal charm was the distinctive element, but unlike their childish predecessors they were tempered by a fear of her power. Every woman looked at her with distrust, if not of the present, at least of the future, and those who were most fervid in their declarations of affection unknowingly made her feel that she was on probation and

that a smile or challenge in the wrong direction might necessitate an unweaving of the web of intimacy.

She was susceptible to "atmospheres" and was immediately aware of hostility, no matter how cleverly concealed. The silence, which others deemed a tribute to her loveliness, was, she knew with unfailing intuition, often a mixture of suspicion and distrust, a struggle between jealousy and justice, tempered, but never dominated, by lukewarm sentiments.

There was no dramatic crisis, but, realizing little by little her inability to inspire friendship as she dreamed it, she accepted its poor substitutes without complaint, gave and took in a half-superficial way, and met advances with an unmoved exterior, which gave her critics opportunity to call her cold and heartless, without contradiction from any one who had the touchstone of truth to prove these statements false.

Men repelled her, although until her understanding with them reached the point of confessions, she held them by the mere force of beauty and social prestige. Afterward, they went away, or stayed, cursing her indifference—the spoiled attitude, as they termed it, of the professional beauty. Always they made her feel the inconsequence of what she was, the consequence of what she seemed; always she felt them studying the external, less their fault, perhaps, than that of nature, which had made it so prominent. Men of the world, the men she knew, believed her incapable of faith because they knew her temptations; they fed her vanity unceasingly, but left her mind and soul to starve. One by one, as she found them wanting, she cast them aside and so gained the reputation of coquetry.

There had been ambitious days, too; days when she felt that she could do, as well as be. Everything worked toward her discouragement. No matter what she essayed, her personal power outweighed effort. She

gave proof of ability in certain artistic ways which, if accomplished by a plainer woman, might have gained the market value of praise from a critical public, but, because of her greater gifts, neither technique nor promise was noticed. Thus, wearied at length by the indifference which kills all but the sturdy plant of genius, her talent, mediocre, it may be, which might at least have proved a solace, followed the way of friendship and love.

So she accepted the world's dictum and nature's questionable favor. She was to herself at length what she had always been to others, the beautiful Clare Porter—merely that. In the early days of self-analysis she had envied the plainer woman who, by the trick of an upturned nose, a score of freckles, a stocky figure, could win friendship, love or success, without handicap; later, she treasured her appearance as one treasures that which is saved from a wreck.

One man gained a foothold in her life. There was no affinity of temperament; at first she disliked, then she became simply indifferent. She read him truly. Her beauty was the sole provocation. She was to him like a gem whose value is enhanced by a difficulty in possession. He wished her to sit at his table, he wished other men to envy him; he wished her with her power to help him toward the pinnacle of social eminence.

He never flaunted his attentions before a watchful world; only he and she knew that he was working toward a certain end, and that nothing but her marriage to another could prevent his ultimate success. Occasionally he would write her what he could not say, a letter full of the cleverness which his legal experience made easy. Reading, she felt like a butterfly impaled on a pin and struggling with futile effort. In the beginning she had answered his letters; lately she had torn them up, but she had never been able to tear them unread, a fact that showed his power.

Occasionally, discouragement pursued her. Why not marry him? As he said, she must marry some time, and with him she would be free, understood in part, at least.

This man was Mark Vane.

He smiled lightly, as he ran down the steps of Mrs. Weymouth's house and walked toward the club. He would dine there and write the letter to Clare that the afternoon's chat had suggested. It was his policy to leave no stone unturned to gain his end. His patience was unwearying, and those who wondered at his legal success never dreamed of the tireless effort that had led to its accomplishment. While others slept he had toiled upward in the night, and the slumbers of his fellows hid from them the secret, which they attributed to chance and fortuitous circumstance.

That this letter, the outcome of feminine controversy, could effect aught but the addition of a link in the chain he was welding he did not dream.

No human being's mind is an open book to another, but there are pages for some, chapters for others. The most acute have presentiments of the last word before it is written. He knew many of her disillusionments, some of her uncertainties, all of her weaknesses. Only the fact of her hunger for affection, the power of tremendous sacrifice for one she loved, her delicacy of soul were hid, for these were beyond his understanding. Like others, he suspected that her indifference to his sex was prompted by an ambition which exacted the superlative; that she would only give herself to a king among men. This creed fed his consummate egotism, for in her final surrender he read an acknowledgment of his worth.

He watched her writhe on the point of his wit and acuteness. He noticed that the words of his letters, apparently ignored, had in reality sunk deep into her soul. Little by little he felt his influence grow, in an occasional following of a suggestion, in a turning to him in moments of per-

plexity, in the acceptance, without protest, of his presence where he could be of use to her, in the quiet satisfaction she showed at his lack of exactness.

She let the pages fall from her hand and gazed thoughtfully into the mirror. She was *en négligée* and her hair was disordered. She put her elbow on the dressing-table and her chin in her palm while she looked at the reflected face, carefully, scrutinizingly. Was what he intimated in his letter true? Was her beauty fading? Was the one treasure that had been allowed her already playing her false? He had never flattered her. His few words of praise had been bestowed in moments of superlative worth; his criticism, equally chary, had been equally effective.

Had others, besides him, noticed and refrained from speaking? Was the praise of friends but habit hiding from her the truth? What was the quotation he had entangled in the clever meshes of his letter?

Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good;
A shining gloss which vadeth suddenly.

It had indeed proved but a vain and doubtful good to her—but that it should fade suddenly and leave her nothing else!

She picked up the letter and read sentences here and there. It was not the first time that under the velvet phrase she had detected the iron purpose. How well he knew her! so well that she was frightened. Nothing he could say would be so effective as this fear he had placed before her, for all time, of losing that which had raised her above the commonplace, brought her prestige and power. Others might live on the memory of past achievement, the actress, the singer, the writer could retain their laurels to the end; the beauty alone loses all when beauty fades.

Was there nothing left, as he implied, but to guard against the sure coming of that day, which was approaching on fleet feet; nothing to be

hoped for but to place on his shoulders the burden of her coming disaster?

She lost herself in psychologic reasoning. All the contradiction of uncertainty swept through her mind and left its currents tangled. Suddenly, she tore his letter from corner to corner and threw it from her, with a passionate gesture. He was a prophet, but like the usual prophet he had told the truth and mistaken the time of its fulfilment. The misfortune of which he spoke might come, but it had not come as yet. Another glance at the mirror reassured her. The paleness caused by the study of the letter's meaning had left her face; a flush illumined it, her eyes were big and bright, her blond hair an aureole of splendor.

Yet, as she turned away from a last look at the perfect lines of her perfect figure, quick disbelief overpowered conviction. What woman's mirror ever told the truth? Cleverly beveled, the light that reaches it tempered with laces and color effects, the story it relates has little to do with that told by the merciless, untempered sun and shade of less-guarded places. How often she had seen women turn away from its falsity with satisfied smiles, unnoting the marks of time and care so plainly visible to other eyes!

She tried to dismiss the subject with trivial memories, and hummed a tune lightly as she was driven to an afternoon reception; but, eating into the placidity of manner, was the corrosion of distrust and the knowledge that, while to all appearance she was only on her way to a friend's "at home," in reality she was on the road that would lead to the fulfilling of a man's will and the adding to her store of husks one last barren hope.

Mrs. Byrd held her two hands as she said, with commiserating accents, "You are not well?"

"Perfectly," was the answer. Then her lips turned white. It was the first time she ever remembered meeting Mrs. Byrd without receiving a com-

pliment on her beauty or grace, not too finely worded, perhaps, but making amends by its evident sincerity.

They chatted of the nothings of life, but she was conscious that Mrs. Byrd's eyes were more watchful than usual and had in them an unanalyzable expression, one she had never seen there before; and, after her first exclamation, she studiously avoided personal comment.

What a student of the heart was this man, Mark Vane! How well he had prophesied, and with what accuracy! Already it seemed that her friends were commiserating her. She would soon be spoken of as faded, etiolated, one who had been. Possibly he had often heard these criticisms and, instead of forcing the time, he had been kind to her and waited to tell her what others already knew.

But her fear was appeased for the moment; others met and flattered, and the premature dread, emphasized by Mrs. Byrd's ejaculation, passed; or, if it attempted to thrust its hydra-head into the calmness of her mind, it was crushed back into futility.

A few days later she met Mrs. Campan. She had been more than usually careful, of late, in the choice of garments, in the thousand little details that go to make a harmonious whole, in those finishing touches that she had often ignored as being time-wasting and, in her case, unnecessary. This day she had on a gown of peculiar shade, daring in its novelty of color and make. She had always listened with quiet amusement to the decisions of others in regard to the possibilities of certain colors; for herself she admitted no dominion—a bit of chiffon, a ribbon or lace, could make any tint wearable.

Mrs. Campan looked at her with the critical stare which usually preceded approval. "That color, Clare—how did you come to choose it? Odd, isn't it? I can't tell whether I like it or not."

It was a gnat's sting, but it found a sensitive surface.

It was at a woman's club reception that she encountered Mrs. Hastings and stopped for a moment's chat. Already the reporters in the back of the room were listing the guests, among whom was "the beautiful Miss Porter." Mrs. Hastings introduced her to Mrs. Vail as "an old school-friend of mine," and then said, pointing to a girlish member recently admitted to the club's arcanum, "It makes us seem old, Clare, doesn't it, to see a child like that eligible to membership?"

There was a matter of eight years' difference in the ages of the two, but Mrs. Vail showed no surprise at this disregard of nature's barrier.

"I hear you are looking fagged and worn," commenced Miss Humphrey's note. "Can't you come to us for a week—the quiet of outdoors will rest you."

"Fagged and worn!" That was the way one commenced to grow old and so passed from distinction to oblivion.

She had not realized before how much she cherished her beauty—that it represented so much to her. All the hopes of her life had been forced to centre on it. At least, if it had not brought her friendship, love or fame, it had compensated in some ways. And now, so soon, the flower of it was passing. "She used to be so beautiful." "You should have seen her in her prime." "Isn't it ghastly the way she has faded?" How frequently she had heard these or similar phrases uttered about other women!

Time had laid its relentless hand upon her and she could not struggle against its weight. She was not old enough for this misfortune, as years go, but she had been prodigal of her gift; she had believed it to be immortal and had wasted it in late hours, in

inner and baffling struggles. She had been a spendthrift in very truth.

The plotters had assembled according to agreement. Mrs. Weymouth had a surprise for them. She opened Clare's letter of regret. "She is to be married quietly to-day, and to whom do you think?"

A dozen names were mentioned.

Mrs. Weymouth shook her head at each in turn.

"Mark Vane."

"Mark Vane!" There was a chorus of astonishment.

When quiet was restored, Mrs. Byrd addressed Mrs. Hastings. "You were right, after all. I admit my mistake. She certainly is very conscious and very vain. I never saw a woman look so hurt as when I told her she was pale—just that. She spoke so sharply I thought my head would drop off."

"I wish you could have seen her when I intimated that her gown wasn't becoming. My maid told me that her maid told her that she gave it to her—her maid, you understand—as soon as she got home—Clare got home, I mean, of course," and Mrs. Campan relapsed into untangled thought.

Miss Humphrey threw up her hands. "I must show you the note she sent me —here it is. I merely said in mine that I heard she was looking tired. You see how indignantly she protests; any one could read between the lines that she is hurt to the core. I wouldn't believe that any woman could be so sensitive about her looks."

"But she is beautiful," asseverated Mrs. Weymouth; "we must admit that."

"*Chacun à son goût,*" responded Mrs. Hastings, with a school-of-language accent.

"The most beautiful creature in the world!" was the accompanying chorus.



WHEN a man first loves he feels unworthy, for no particular reason. Later he acquires the reason, and forgets to feel unworthy.

HOW TO LIVE IN LUXURY

I HAVE had my own carriage and ridden my fill,
 I have gone to three balls in a night;
 I have lit my cigar with a ten-dollar bill,
 And all when my money was tight.

The carriage was back in my babyhood days,
 The balls were my uncle's, it's true;
 A board-bill it was from which curled the blue haze—
 Which shows what a poor man can do.

MCLANDBURGH WILSON.



WHICH ONE WAS HE?

"HELLO, my dear!" he exclaimed, greeting the prettiest girl on the veranda.
 "I've just come in on the train and I'm delighted to meet you again."
 "I—I'm afraid—" she stammered.

"Why, don't you remember me?" he asked, in surprise. "I met you here last season. You fell in love with me and we were engaged for two weeks."

"Your face does seem familiar," she said, as they seated themselves in a secluded nook, "but I can't just place you."

"I came up here in the hope of meeting you again and renewing our old ties," he pleaded.

"I can't give you any hope," she returned; "not just yet. You see, my love-making last season was rather disastrous. I was engaged three times. The first one palmed himself off as a count. He raised false hopes in my heart, but I've got over that. The second fooled me on a paste engagement ring. I've forgiven him that, for he was jolly company. But the third—oh, he was a heartless wretch! When he was going away, he told me he had lost his return ticket, and I lent him six dollars and forty cents. I thought he was the soul of honor, but he never sent it to me. I hadn't a cent of pin-money left, and I swore that if I ever met him again he'd have to make good."

J. J. O'CONNELL.



THE OTHER SIDE OF IT

IT is remarkable what exceedingly scrubby oaks are sometimes developed from even the most promising acorns.

ICELANDIC LYRICS

By Bliss Carman

THREE'S not a little boat, sweetheart,
That dances on the tide,
There's not a nodding daisy-head
In all the meadows wide;

In all the warm green orchards,
Where bright birds sing and stray,
There's not a whistling oriole
So glad as I this day!

II

She said, "In all the purple hills,
Where dance the lilies blue,
Where all day long the springing larks
Make fairy-tales come true,

"Where you can lie for hours and watch
The unfathomable sky,
There's not a breath of all the June
That's half so glad as I!"

III

I know how the great and golden sun
Will come up out of the sea,
Stride in to shore
And up to her door,
To touch her hand and her hair,
With so much more than a man can say,
Bidding Yvonne good day.

I know how the great and quiet moon
Will come up out of the sea,
And climb the hill
To her window-sill
And enter all silently,
And lie on her little cot so white,
Kissing Yvonne good night.

THE SMART SET

I know how the great and countless stars
 Will come up out of the sea,
 To keep their guard
 By her still dooryard,
 Lest the soul of Yvonne should stray
 And be lost forever there by the deep,
 In the wonderful hills of sleep.

IV

Another day comes up,
 Wears over, and goes down;
 And it seems an age has passed
 In a little seaboard town,

 To one who must weary and wait
 Till the sun comes round once more,
 Before he may tap on the pane
 And lift the latch of your door.

V

The moonlight is a garden
 Upon the mountain side,
 Wherein your gleaming spirit
 All lovely and grave-eyed,

 Touched with the happy craving
 That will not be denied,
 Aforetime used to wander
 Until it reached my side.

 Oh, wild, white forest flower,
 Rose-love and lily-pride,
 And stanch of burning beauty
 Against your lover's side!

VI

The lily said to the rose,
 "What will become of our pride
 When Yvonne comes down the path?"
 And the crimson rose replied,

 "Our beauty and pride must wane,
 Yet shall we endure to stir
 The fancy of lovers unborn
 In metaphors of her."

VII

The white water-lilies, they sleep on the lake,
 Till over the mountain the sun bids them wake.

At the rose-tinted touch of the long, level ray,
Each pure, perfect blossom unfolds to the day.

Each affluent petal outstretched and uncurled
To the glory and gladness and shine of the world.

O whiter land-lily, asleep in the dawn,
While yet the cool curtain of stars is half drawn,

And all the dark forest is mystic and still,
With the great yellow planet aglow on the hill,

Hark, somewhere among the gray beeches a thrush
Sends the first thrill of soul to requicken the hush!

With a flutter of eyelids, a sigh soft and deep,
An unfolding of rosy warm fingers from sleep,

For one perfect day more to love, gladden and roam,
Thy spirit comes back to its flowerlike home.

VIII

I do not long for fame,
Nor triumph, nor trumpets of praise;
I only wish my name
To endure in the coming days,

When men say, musing at times,
With smiling speech and slow,
“He was a maker of rhymes
Yvonne loved long ago!”



FOILED

CRRAWFORD—How was it you didn't go away to the country for the Summer?

CRABSHAW—My wife changed her mind about going.

CRAWFORD—Why, wouldn't you go without her?

CRABSHAW—Yes; that was why I wouldn't go.



THOSE GIRLS

MAE—Grace says her face is her fortune.

ETHEL—Does she? I should call it her misfortune.

THE SUMMER GIRL

WITH many a man I idly sport
 Through Summer's gay commotion.
 I hold my court at each resort
 At mountain, lake or ocean.
 I swim, I row, I hunt, I dance
 With every age and station,
 The ancient lord, the young divine
 Upon a brief vacation.
 I chatter, chatter as we row
 Upon the brimming river—
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on forever!

I listen oft on evenings fair
 To lover's fond recital,
 With here and there a millionaire
 And here and there a title;
 And now and then a poet-swain
 Beside me as we're sailing,
 Who sings a sentimental strain
 To mandolin's soft wailing.
 I lead them on, and then say "No,"
 Upon the brimming river—
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on forever!

I'm quite at home at any sport,
 At billiards, golf, croquet,
 Bridge, ping-pong and on tennis court;
 I'm belle by night or day.
 I sketch, I pose, I wear swell clothes,
 I talk on book or star,
 I sing the very latest songs
 And twang the light guitar.
 I chatter well of all I know,
 Beside the brimming river—
 For men may come and men may go,
 But I go on forever!

E. W. CHASE.



HE HASTENS TO EXPLAIN

THE WIFE—I believe that Mrs. Rivers thinks I am a fool.
 THE HUSBAND—There is evidence of that!
 "Of what?"
 "That she thinks you are a fool, my dear."

THE STORY OF JEES UCK

By Jack London

THREE have been renunciations, and renunciations. But, in its essence, renunciation is ever the same. And the paradox of it is that men and women forego the dearest thing in the world for something dearer. It was never otherwise. Thus it was when Abel brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. The firstlings and the fat thereof were to him the dearest things in the world; yet he gave them over that he might be on good terms with God. So it was with Abraham when he prepared to offer up his son Isaac on a stone. Isaac was very dear to him; but God, in incomprehensible ways, was yet dearer. It may be that Abraham feared the Lord. But whether that be true or not, it has since been determined by a few billion people that he loved the Lord and desired to serve him.

And since it has been determined that love is service, and since to renounce is to serve, then Jees Uck, who was merely a woman of a swart-skinned breed, loved with a great love. She was unversed in history, having learned to read only the signs of weather and of game; so she had never heard of Abel, or Abraham; nor, having escaped the good sisters at Holy Cross, had she been told the story of Ruth, the Moabitess, who did renounce her very God for the sake of a stranger woman from a strange land. Jees Uck had learned only one way of renouncing, and that was with a club as the dynamic factor, in much the same manner as a dog is made to renounce a stolen marrow-bone. Yet, when the time came,

she proved herself capable of rising to the height of the fair-faced royal races and of renouncing in right regal fashion.

So this is the story of Jees Uck, which is also the story of Neil Bonner, and Kitty Bonner, and a couple of Neil Bonner's progeny. Jees Uck was of a swart-skinned breed, it is true, but she was not an Indian; nor was she an Eskimo; nor even an Innuit. Going backward into mouth-tradition, there appears the figure of one Skolkz, a Toyaat Indian of the Yukon, who journeyed down in his youth to the Great Delta, where dwell the Innuits and where he gathered with a woman remembered as Olillie. Now the woman Olillie had been bred from an Eskimo mother by an Innuit man. And from Skolkz and Olillie came Halie, who was one-half Toyaat Indian, one-quarter Innuit and one-quarter Eskimo. And Halie was the grandmother of Jees Uck.

Now Halie, in whom three stocks had been bastardized, who cherished no prejudice against further admixture, mated with a Russian fur-trader called Shpack, also known in his time as the Big Fat. Shpack is herein classed Russian for lack of a more adequate term; for Shpack's father, a Slavonic convict from the Lower Provinces, had escaped from the quicksilver mines into Northern Siberia, where he knew Zimba, who was a woman of the Deer People and who became the mother of Shpack, who became the grandfather of Jees Uck.

Now had not Shpack been captured

in his boyhood by the Sea People, who fringe the rim of the Arctic Sea with their misery, he would not have become the grandfather of Jees Uck and there would be no story at all. But he was captured by the Sea People, from whom he escaped to Kamchatka, and thence, on a Norwegian whaleship, to the Baltic. Not long after that he turned up in St. Petersburg, and the years were not many when he went drifting east over the same weary road his father had measured with blood and groans a half-century before. But Shpack was a free man, in the employ of the great Russian Fur Company. And in that employ he fared farther and farther east, until he crossed Bering Sea into Russian America; and at Pastolik, which is hard by the Great Delta of the Yukon, became the husband of Halie, who was the grandmother of Jees Uck. Out of this union came the woman-child, Tukesan.

Shpack, under the orders of the company, made a canoe voyage of a few hundred miles up the Yukon to the post of Nulato. With him he took Halie and the babe Tukesan. This was in 1850, and in 1850 it was that the river Indians fell upon Nulato and wiped it from the face of the earth. And that was the end of Shpack and Halie. On that terrible night Tukesan disappeared. To this day the Toyaats aver they had no hand in the trouble; but, be that as it may, the fact none the less remains that the babe Tukesan grew up in their midst.

Tukesan was married successively to two Toyaat brothers, to both of whom she was barren. Because of this, other women shook their heads and no third Toyaat man could be found to dare matrimony with the childless widow. But at this time many hundred miles above, at Fort Yukon, was a man, Spike O'Brien. Fort Yukon was a Hudson Bay Company post, and Spike O'Brien one of the company's servants. He was a good servant, but he achieved an

opinion that the service was bad, and in the course of time vindicated that opinion by deserting. It was a year's journey, by the chain of posts, back to York Factory on Hudson's Bay. Further, being company posts, he knew he could not evade the company's clutches. Nothing remained but to go down the Yukon. It was true no white man had ever gone down the Yukon, and no white man knew whether the Yukon emptied into the Arctic Ocean or Bering Sea; but Spike O'Brien was a Celt, and the promise of danger was a lure he had ever followed.

A few weeks later, somewhat battered, rather famished and about dead with river-fever, he drove the nose of his canoe into the earth bank by the village of the Toyaats and promptly fainted away. While getting his strength back, in the weeks that followed, he looked upon Tukesan and found her good. Like the father of Shpack, who lived to a ripe old age among the Siberian Deer People, Spike O'Brien might have left his aged bones with the Toyaats. Only, romance gripped his heart-strings and would not let him stay. As he had journeyed from York Factory to Fort Yukon, so, first among men, might he journey from Fort Yukon to the sea and win the honor of first man to make the Northwest Passage by land. So he departed down the river, won the honor and was unannaled and unsung. In after years he ran a sailors' boarding-house in San Francisco, where he became esteemed a most remarkable liar by virtue of the gospel truths he told. But a child was born to Tukesan, who had been childless. And this child was Jees Uck. Her lineage has been traced at length to show that she was neither Indian, nor Eskimo, nor Innuit, nor much of anything else; also to show what waifs of the generations we are, all of us, and the meanderings of the seed from which we spring.

What with the vagrant blood in her and the heritage compounded of many races, Jees Uck developed a wonderful young beauty. Bizarre, perhaps, it

was, and Oriental enough to puzzle any passing ethnologist. A lithe and slender grace characterized her. Beyond a quickened lilt to the imagination, the contribution of the Celt was in no wise apparent. It might possibly have put the warm blood under her skin, which made her face less swart and her body fairer; but that, in turn, might have come from Shpack, the Big Fat, who inherited the color of his Slavonic father. And, finally, she had great, blazing black eyes—the half-caste eye, round, full-orbed and sensuous, which marks the collision of the dark races with the light. Also, the white blood in her, combined with her knowledge that it was in her, made her, in a way, ambitious. Otherwise, by upbringing and in outlook on life, she was wholly and utterly a Toyaat Indian.

One Winter, when she was a young woman, Neil Bonner came into her life. But he came into her life, as he had come into the country, somewhat reluctantly. In fact, it went very much against his grain, coming into the country. Between a father who clipped coupons and cultivated roses, and a mother who loved the social round, Neil Bonner had gone rather wild. He was not vicious, but a man with meat in his belly and without work in the world has to expend his energy somehow, and Neil Bonner was such a man. And he expended his energy in such fashion and to such an extent that when the inevitable climax came, his father, Neil Bonner, senior, crawled out of his roses in a panic and looked on his son with a wondering eye. Then he hied himself away to a crony of kindred pursuits, with whom he was wont to confer over coupons and roses, and between the two the destiny of young Neil Bonner was made manifest. He must go away, on probation, to live down his harmless follies in order that he might live up to their own excellent standard.

This determined upon, and young Neil a little repentant and a great deal ashamed, the rest was easy. The cronies were heavy stockholders in the P. C. Company. The P. C. Company

owned fleets of river-steamers and ocean-going craft, and, in addition to farming the sea, exploited a hundred thousand square miles or so of the land which, on the maps of geographers, usually occupies the white spaces. So the P. C. Company sent young Neil Bonner north, where the white spaces are, to do its work and to learn to be good, like his father. "Five years of simplicity, close to the soil and far from temptation, will make a man of him," said old Neil Bonner, and forthwith crawled back into his roses. Young Neil set his jaw, pitched his chin at the proper angle and went to work. As an underling he did his work well and gained the commendation of his superiors. Not that he delighted in the work, but that it was the one thing that prevented him from going mad.

The first year he wished he were dead. The second year he cursed God. The third year he was divided between the two emotions, and in the confusion quarreled with a man in authority. He had the best of the quarrel, though the man in authority had the last word—a word that sent Neil Bonner into an exile that made his old billet appear as paradise. But he went without a whimper, for the North had succeeded in making him into a man.

Here and there, on the white spaces on the map, little circlets like the letter "o" are to be found, and, appended to these circlets, on one side or the other, are names, such as "Fort Hamilton," "Yanana Station," "Twenty Mile," thus leading one to imagine that the white spaces are plentifully besprinkled with towns and villages. But it is a vain imagining. Twenty Mile, which is very like the rest of the posts, is a log building the size of a corner grocery, with rooms to let up-stairs. A long-legged cache on stilts may be found in the back-yard; also a couple of out-houses. The back-yard is unfenced and extends to the sky-line and an unascertainable bit beyond. There are no other houses in sight, though the Toyaats sometimes pitch a Winter

camp a mile or two down the Yukon. And this is Twenty Mile, one tentacle of the many-tentacled P. C. Company. Here the agent, with an assistant, barter with the Indians for their furs and does an erratic trade on a gold-dust basis with the wandering miners. Here, also, the agent and his assistant yearn all Winter for the Spring, and when the Spring comes, camp blasphemously on the roof while the Yukon washes out the establishment. And here, also, in the fourth year of his sojourn in the land, came Neil Bonner to take charge.

He had displaced no agent; for the man who previously ran the post had made away with himself; "because of the rigors of the place," said the assistant, who still remained; though the Toyaats, by their fires, had another version. The assistant was a shrunken-shouldered, hollow-chested man, with a cadaverous face and cavernous cheeks which his sparse black beard could not hide. He coughed much, as though consumption gripped his lungs, while his eyes had that mad, fevered light common to consumptives in the last stage. Pentley was his name—Amos Pentley—and Bonner did not like him, though he felt a pity for the forlorn and hopeless devil. They did not get along together, these two men who, of all men, should have been on good terms in the face of the cold and silence and darkness of the long Winter.

In the end, Bonner concluded that Amos was partly demented, and left him alone, doing all the work himself except the cooking. Even then, Amos had nothing but bitter looks and an undisguised hatred for him. This was a great loss to Bonner; for the smiling face of one of his own kind, the cheery word, the sympathy of comradeship shared with misfortune—these things meant much; and the Winter was yet young when he began to realize the added reasons, with such an assistant, which the previous agent had found to impel his own hand against his life.

It was very lonely at Twenty Mile.

The bleak vastness stretched away on every side to the horizon. The snow, which was really frost, flung its mantle over the land and buried everything in the silence of death. For days it was clear and cold, the thermometer steadily recording forty to fifty degrees below zero. Then a change came over the face of things. What little moisture had oozed into the atmosphere gathered into dull-gray, formless clouds; it became quite warm, the thermometer rising to twenty below; and the moisture fell out of the sky in hard frost-granules that hissed like dry sugar or driving sand when kicked under foot. After that it became clear and cold again, until enough moisture had gathered to blanket the earth from the cold of outer space. That was all. Nothing happened. No storms, no churning waters and threshing forests, nothing but the machine-like precipitation of accumulated moisture. Possibly the most notable thing that occurred through the weary weeks was the gliding of the temperature up to the unprecedented height of fifteen below. To atone for this, outer space smote the earth with its cold till the mercury froze and the spirit thermometer remained more than seventy below for a fortnight, when it burst. There was no telling how much colder it was after that. Another occurrence, monotonous in its regularity, was the lengthening of the nights, till day became a mere blink of light between the darknesses.

Neil Bonner was a social animal. The very follies for which he was doing penance had been bred of his excessive sociability. And here, in the fourth year of his exile, he found himself in company—which were to travesty the word—with a morose and speechless creature in whose somber eyes smouldered a hatred as bitter as it was unwarranted. And Bonner, to whom speech and fellowship were as the breath of life, went about as a ghost might go, tantalized by the gregarious revelries of some former life. In the day his lips were compressed,

his face stern; but in the night he clenched his hands, rolled about in his blankets, and cried aloud like a little child. And he would remember a certain man in authority and curse him through the long hours. Also, he cursed God. But God understands. He cannot find it in His heart to blame weak mortals who blaspheme in Alaska.

And here, to the post of Twenty Mile, came Jees Uck, to trade for flour and bacon, and beads and bright scarlet cloths for her fancy work. And further, and unwittingly, she came to the post of Twenty Mile to make a lonely man more lonely and to reach out empty arms in his sleep. For Neil Bonner was only a man. When she first came into the store he looked at her long, as a thirsty man may look at a flowing well. And she, with the heritage bequeathed her by Spike O'Brien, imagined daringly and smiled up into his eyes, not as the swart-skinned peoples should smile at the royal races, but as a woman smiles at a man. The thing was inevitable; only, he did not see it, and fought against her as fiercely and passionately as he was drawn toward her. And she? She was Jees Uck, by upbringing wholly and utterly a Toyaat Indian woman.

She came often to the post to trade. And often she sat by the big wood-stove and chatted in broken English with Neil Bonner. And he came to look for her coming; and on the days she did not come he was worried and restless. Sometimes he stopped to think, and then she was met coldly, with a reserve that perplexed and piqued her; which, she was convinced, was not sincere. But more often he did not dare to think, and then all went well and there were smiles and laughter. And Amos Pentley, gasping like a stranded catfish, his hollow cough a-reek with the grave, looked upon it all and grinned. He, who loved life, could not live, and it rankled his soul that others should be able to live. Wherefore he hated Bonner, who was so very much alive and into whose eyes sprang joy at the

sight of Jees Uck. As for Amos, the very thought of the girl was sufficient to send his blood pounding up into a hemorrhage.

Jees Uck, whose mind was simple, who thought elementally and was unused to weighing life in its subtler quantities, read Amos Pentley like a book. She warned Bonner, openly and bluntly, in few words; but the complexities of higher existence confused the situation to him and he laughed at her evident anxiety. To him, Amos was a poor, miserable devil, tottering desperately into the grave. And Bonner, who had suffered much, found it easy to forgive greatly.

But one morning, during a bitter snap, he got up from the breakfast table and went into the store. Jees Uck was already there, rosy, from the trail, to buy a sack of flour. A few minutes later, he was out in the snow lashing the flour on her sled. As he bent over he noticed a stiffness in his neck and felt a premonition of impending physical misfortune. And as he put the last half-hitch into the lashing and attempted to straighten up, a quick spasm seized him and he sank into the snow. Tense and quivering, head jerked back, limbs extended, back arched and mouth twisted and distorted, he appeared as though being racked limb from limb. Without cry or sound, Jees Uck was in the snow beside him; but he clutched both her wrists spasmodically, and as long as the convulsion endured she was helpless. In a few moments the spasm relaxed and he was left weak and fainting, his forehead beaded with sweat, his lips flecked with foam.

"Quick!" he muttered, in a strange, hoarse voice. "Quick! Inside!"

He started to crawl on hands and knees, but she raised him up, and, supported by her young arm, he made faster progress. As he entered the store the spasm seized him again and his body writhed irresistibly away from her and rolled and curled on the floor. Amos Pentley came and looked on with curious eyes.

"Oh, Amos!" she cried in an agony

of apprehension and helplessness, "him die, you think?" But Amos shrugged his shoulders and continued to look on.

Bonner's body went slack, the tense muscles easing down and an expression of relief coming into his face. "Quick!" he gritted between his teeth, his mouth twisting with the oncoming of the next spasm and with his effort to control it. "Quick, Jees Uck! The medicine! Never mind! Drag me!"

She knew where the medicine-chest stood, at the rear of the room, beyond the stove, and thither, by the legs, she dragged the struggling man. As the spasm passed, but very faint and very sick, he began to overhaul the chest. He had seen dogs die exhibiting symptoms similar to his own and he knew what should be done. He held up a vial of chloral hydrate, but his fingers were too weak and nerveless to draw the cork. This Jees Uck did for him, while he was plunged into another convulsion. As he came out of it he found the open bottle proffered him and looked into the great black eyes of the woman and read what men have always read in the Mate-Woman's eyes. Taking a full dose of the stuff, he sank back until another spasm had passed. Then he raised himself limply on his elbow.

"Listen, Jees Uck!" he said, very slowly, as though aware of the necessity for haste and yet afraid to hasten. "Do what I say. Stay by my side, but do not touch me. I must be very quiet, but you must not go away." His jaw began to set and his face to quiver and distort with the fore-running pangs, but he gulped and struggled to master them. "Do not go away. And do not let Amos go away. Understand! Amos must stay right here."

She nodded her head, and he passed off into the first of many convulsions, which gradually diminished in force and frequency. Jees Uck hung over him, remembering his injunction and not daring to touch him. Once Amos grew restless and made as though to go into the kitchen; but a quick

blaze from her eyes quelled him, and after that, save for his labored breathing and charnel cough, he was very quiet.

Bonner slept. The blink of light, which marked the day, disappeared. Amos, followed about by the woman's eyes, lighted the kerosene lamps. Evening came on. Through the north window the heavens were emblazoned with an auroral display, which flamed and flared and died down into blackness. Some time after that, Neil Bonner roused. First he looked to see that Amos was still there, then smiled at Jees Uck and pulled himself up. Every muscle was stiff and sore, and he smiled ruefully, pressing and prod-ing himself as if to ascertain the extent of the ravage. Then his face went stern and businesslike.

"Jees Uck," he said, "take a candle. Go into the kitchen. There is food on the table—biscuits and beans and bacon; also, coffee in the pot on the stove. Bring it here on the counter. Also, bring tumblers and water and whiskey, which you will find on the top shelf of the locker. Do not forget the whiskey."

Having swallowed a stiff glass of the whiskey, he went carefully through the medicine-chest, now and again putting aside, with definite purpose, certain bottles and vials. Then he set to work on the food, attempting a crude analysis. He had not been unused to the laboratory in his college days and was possessed of sufficient imagination to achieve results with his limited materials. The condition of tetanus which had marked his paroxysms simplified matters, and he made but one test. The coffee yielded nothing; nor did the beans. To the biscuits he devoted the utmost care. Amos, who knew nothing of chemistry, looked on with steady curiosity. But Jees Uck, who had boundless faith in the white man's wisdom, and especially in Neil Bonner's wisdom, and who not only knew nothing but knew that she knew nothing, watched his face rather than what he did with his hands.

Step by step, he eliminated possibilities, until he came to the final test. He was using a thin medicine vial for a tube and this he held between him and the light, watching the slow precipitation of a salt through the solution contained in the tube. He said nothing, but he saw what he had expected to see. And Jees Uck, her eyes riveted on his face, saw something, too—something that made her spring like a tigress upon Amos and with splendid suppleness and strength bend his body back across her knee. Her knife was out of its sheath and uplifted, glinting in the lamp-light. Amos was snarling; but Bonner intervened ere the blade could fall.

"That's a good girl, Jees Uck. But never mind. Let him go!"

She dropped the man obediently, though with protest writ large on her face; and his body thudded to the floor. Bonner nudged him with his moccasined foot.

"Get up, Amos!" he commanded. "You've got to pack an outfit yet tonight and hit the trail."

"You don't mean to say—" Amos blurted, savagely.

"I mean to say that you tried to kill me," Neil went on, in cold, even tones. "I mean to say that you killed Birdsall, for all the company believes he killed himself. You used strychnine in my case. God knows with what you fixed him. Now I can't hang you. You're too near dead, as it is. But Twenty Mile is too small for the pair of us, and you've got to mush. It's two hundred miles to Holy Cross. You can make it if you're careful not to over-exert. I'll give you grub, a sled and three dogs. You'll be as safe as if you were in jail, for you can't get out of the country. And I'll give you one chance. You're almost dead. Very well. I shall send no word to the company until the Spring. In the meantime, the thing for you to do is to die. Now, *mush!*"

"You go to bed!" Jees Uck insisted, when Amos had churned away into

the night toward Holy Cross. "You sick man yet, Neil?"

"And you're a good girl, Jees Uck," he answered. "And here's my hand on it. But you must go home."

"You don't like me," she said, simply.

He smiled, helped her on with her parka and led her to the door. "Only too well, Jees Uck," he said, softly; "only too well."

After that the pall of the Arctic night fell deeper and blacker on the land. Neil Bonner discovered that he had failed to put the proper valuation upon even the sullen face of the murderous and death-stricken Amos. It became very lonely at Twenty Mile. "For the love of God, Prentiss, send me a man," he wrote to the agent at Fort Hamilton, three hundred miles up river. Six weeks later the Indian messenger brought back a reply. It was characteristic: "Hell. Both feet frozen. Need him myself—Prentiss."

To make matters worse, most of the Toyaats were in the back country on the flanks of a cariboo herd, and Jees Uck was with them. Removing to a distance seemed to bring her closer than ever, and Neil Bonner found himself picturing her, day by day, in camp and on trail. It is not good to be alone. Often he went out of the quiet store, bare-headed and frantic, and shook his fist at the blink of day that came over the southern sky-line. And on still, cold nights he left his bed and stumbled into the frost, where he assaulted the silence at the top of his lungs, as though it were some tangible, sentient thing which he might arouse; or he shouted at the sleeping dogs till they howled and howled again. One shaggy brute he brought into the post, playing that it was the new man sent by Prentiss. He strove to make it sleep decently under blankets at night and to sit at table and eat as a man should; but the beast, mere domesticated wolf that it was, rebelled, and sought out dark corners and snarled and bit him in the leg, and was finally beaten and driven forth.

Then the trick of personification

seized upon Neil Bonner and mastered him. All the cardinal forces of his environment metamorphosed into living, breathing entities and came to live with him. He re-created the primitive pantheon; reared an altar to the sun and burned candle-fat and bacon-grease thereon; and in the unfenced yard, by the long-legged cache, made a frost-devil, which he was wont to make faces at and mock when the mercury climbed down into the bulb. All this in play, of course. He said it to himself that it was in play, and repeated it over and over to make sure, unaware that madness is ever prone to express itself in make-believe and play.

One Midwinter day, Father Champreau, a Jesuit missionary, pulled into Twenty Mile. Bonner fell upon him and dragged him into the post, and clung to him and wept, until the priest wept with him from sheer compassion. Then Bonner became madly hilarious and made lavish entertainment, swearing valiantly that his guest should not depart. But Father Champreau was pressing to Salt Water on urgent business for his order and pulled out next morning, with Bonner's blood threatened on his head.

And the threat was in a fair way toward realization, when the Toyaats returned from their long hunt to the Winter camp. They had many furs, and there was much trading and stir at Twenty Mile. Also, Jees Uck came to buy beads and scarlet cloths and things, and Bonner began to find himself again. He fought for a week against her. Then the end came, one night, when she rose to leave. She had not forgotten her repulse, and the pride that drove Spike O'Brien on to complete the Northwest Passage by land was her pride.

"I go now," she said; "good night, Neil."

But he came up behind her. "Nay, it is not well," he said.

And as she turned her face toward his with a sudden joyful flash, he bent forward, slowly and gravely, as it were a sacred thing, and kissed her on the

lips. The Toyaats had never taught her the meaning of a kiss upon the lips, but she understood and was glad.

With the coming of Jees Uck, at once things brightened up. She was regal in her happiness, a source of unending delight. The elemental workings of her mind and her naïve little ways made a countless sum of pleasurable surprise to the over-civilized man who had stooped to catch her up. Not alone was she solace to his loneliness, but her primitiveness rejuvenated his jaded mind. It was as though, after long wandering, he had returned to pillow his head in the lap of Mother Earth. In short, in Jees Uck he found the youth of the world—the youth and the strength and the joy.

And to fill the full round of his need, and that they might not see overmuch of each other, there arrived at Twenty Mile one Sandy Macpherson, as companionable a man as ever whistled along the trail or raised a ballad by a campfire. A Jesuit priest had run into his camp, a couple of hundred miles up the Yukon, in the nick of time to say a last word over the body of Sandy's partner. And on departing the priest had said, "My son, you will be lonely now." And Sandy had bowed his head brokenly. "At Twenty Mile," the priest added, "there is a lonely man. You have need of each other, my son."

So it was that Sandy became a welcome third at the post, brother to the man and woman who resided there. He took Bonner moose-hunting and wolf-trapping; and, in return, Bonner resurrected a battered and wayworn volume and made him friends with Shakespeare, till Sandy declaimed *Mark Antony* to his sled-dogs whenever they waxed mutinous. And of the long evenings they played cribbage and talked and disagreed about the universe, the while Jees Uck rocked matronly in an easy-chair and darned their moccasins and socks.

Spring came. The sun shot up out of the south. The land exchanged its austere robes for the garb of a smiling

wanton. Everywhere light laughed and life invited. The days stretched out their balmy length and the nights passed from blinks of darkness to no darkness at all. The river bared its bosom and snorting steamboats challenged the wilderness. There were stir and bustle, new faces and fresh facts. An assistant arrived at Twenty Mile, and Sandy Macpherson wandered off with a bunch of prospectors to invade the Koyukuk country. And there were newspapers and magazines, and letters for Neil Bonner. And Jees Uck looked on in worriment, for she knew his kindred talked with him across the world.

Without much shock, it came to him that his father was dead. There was a sweet letter of forgiveness, dictated in his last hours. There were official letters from the company, graciously ordering him to turn the post over to the assistant and permitting him to depart at his earliest pleasure. A long, legal affair from the lawyers informed him of interminable lists of stocks and bonds, real estate, rents and chattels that were his by his father's will. And a dainty bit of stationery, sealed and monogrammed, implored dear Neil's return to his heart-broken, helpless and loving mother.

Neil Bonner did some swift thinking, and when the *Yukon Belle* coughed in to the bank on her way down to Bering Sea, he departed—departed, with the ancient lie of quick return young and blithe on his lips.

"I'll come back, dear Jees Uck, before the first snow flies," he promised her, between the last kisses at the gang-plank.

And not only did he promise, but, like the majority of men under the same circumstances, he really meant it. To John Thompson, the new agent, he gave orders for the extension of unlimited credit to his wife, Jees Uck. Also, with his last look from the deck of the *Yukon Belle*, he saw a dozen men at work rearing the logs that were to make the most comfortable house along a thousand miles of river front—the house of Jees Uck, and likewise the

house of Neil Bonner—ere the first flurry of snow. For he fully and fondly meant to come back. Jees Uck was dear to him, and, further, a golden future waited the North. With his father's money he intended to verify that future. An ambitious dream allured him. With his four years of experience, and aided by the friendly co-operation of the P. C. Company, he would return to become the Rhodes of Alaska. And he would return, fast as steam could drive, as soon as he had put into shape the affairs of his father, whom he had never known, and comforted his mother, whom he had forgotten.

There was much ado when Neil Bonner came back from the Arctic. The fires were lighted and the flesh-pots slung, and he took of it all and called it good. Not only was he bronzed and creased, but he was a new man under his skin, with a grip on things and a seriousness and control. His old companions were amazed when he declined to hit up the pace in the good old way, while his father's crony rubbed hands gaily and became an authority upon the reclamation of wayward and idle youth.

For four years Neil Bonner's mind had lain fallow. Little that was new had been added to it, but it had undergone a process of selection. It had, so to say, been purged of the trivial and superfluous. He had lived quick years, down in the world; and up in the wilds, time had been given him to organize the confused mass of his experiences. His superficial standards had been flung to the winds and new standards erected on deeper and broader generalizations. Concerning civilization, he had gone away with one set of values, had returned with another set of values. Aided, also, by the earth-smells in his nostrils and the earth-sights in his eyes, he laid hold of the inner significance of civilization, beholding with clear vision its futilities and powers. It was a simple little philosophy he evolved. Clean living was the way to grace. Duty

Sept. 1902

performed was sanctification. One must live clean and do his duty in order that he might work. Work was salvation. And to work toward life abundant, and more abundant, was to be in line with the scheme of things and the will of God.

Primarily, he was of the city. And his fresh earth-grip and virile conception of humanity gave him a finer sense of civilization and endeared civilization to him. Day by day the people of the city clung closer to him and the world loomed more colossal. And, day by day, Alaska grew more remote and less real. And then he met Kitty Sharon—a woman of his own flesh and blood and kind; a woman who put her hand into his hand and drew him to her, till he forgot the day and hour and the time of the year the first snow flies on the Yukon.

Jees Uck moved into her grand log-house and dreamed away three golden Summer months. Then came the Autumn, post-haste before the down-rush of Winter. The air grew thin and sharp, the days thin and short. The river ran sluggishly and skin-ice formed in the quiet eddies. All migratory life departed south and silence fell upon the land. The first snow-flurries came and the last homing steamboat bucked desperately into the running mush-ice. Then came the hard ice, solid cakes and sheets, till the Yukon ran level with its banks. And when all this ceased the river stood still and the blinking days lost themselves in the darkness.

John Thompson, the new agent, laughed; but Jees Uck had faith in the mischances of sea and river. Neil Bonner might be frozen in anywhere between Chilcoot Pass and St. Michael's, for the last travelers of the year are always caught by the ice, when they exchange boat for sled and dash on through the long hours behind the flying dogs.

But no flying dogs came up the trail, or down the trail, to Twenty Mile. And John Thompson told Jees Uck, with a certain gladness ill-concealed, that Bonner would never come back

again. Also, and brutally, he suggested his own eligibility. Jees Uck laughed in his face and went back to her grand log-house. But when Mid-winter came, when hope dies down and life is at its lowest ebb, Jees Uck found she had no credit at the store. This was Thompson's doing, and he rubbed his hands, and walked up and down, and came to his door and looked up at Jees Uck's house, and waited. And he continued to wait. She sold her dog-team to a party of miners and paid cash for her food. And when Thompson refused to honor even her coin, Toyaat Indians made her purchases and sledded them up to her house in the dark.

In February the first post came in over the ice, and John Thompson read in the society column of a five-months'-old paper of the marriage of Neil Bonner and Kitty Sharon. Jees Uck held the door ajar and him outside while he imparted the information; and, when he had done, laughed proudly and did not believe. In March, and all alone, she gave birth to a man-child, a brave bit of new life at which she marveled. And at that hour, a year later, Neil Bonner sat by another bed, marveling at another bit of new life which had fared into the world.

The snow went off the ground and the ice broke out of the Yukon. The sun journeyed north, and journeyed south again; and, the money from the dogs being spent, Jees Uck went back to her own people. Oche Ish, a shrewd hunter, proposed to kill the meat for her and her babe, and catch the salmon, if she would marry him. And Imego and Hah Yo and Wy Nooth, husky young hunters all, made similar proposals. But she elected to live alone and seek her own meat and fish. She sewed moccasins and parkas and mittens—warm, serviceable things, and pleasing to the eye, withal, what of the ornamental hair-tufts and bead work. These she sold to the miners, who were drifting faster into the land each year. And not only did she win food that was plain and plentiful, but she laid money by, and one day took

passage on the *Yukon Belle* down the river.

At St. Michael's she washed dishes in the kitchen of the post. The servants of the company wondered at the remarkable woman with the remarkable child, though they asked no questions and she vouchsafed nothing. But just before Bering Sea closed in for the year, she bought a passage south on a strayed sealing-schooner. That Winter she cooked for Captain Markheim's household at Unalaska, and in the Spring continued south to Sitka on a whiskey-sloop. Later, she appeared at Metlakahtla, which is near to St. Mary's on the end of the Pan-Handle, where she worked in the cannery through the salmon season. When Autumn came and the Siwash fishermen prepared to return to Puget Sound, she embarked with a couple of families in a big cedar canoe; and with them she threaded the hazardous chaos of the Alaskan and Canadian coasts, till the Straits of Juan de Fuca were passed and she led her boy by the hand up the hard pave of Seattle.

There she met Sandy Macpherson, on a windy corner, very much surprised and, when he had heard her story, very wroth—not so wroth as he might have been, had he known of Kitty Sharon; but of her Jees Uck breathed no word, for she had never believed. Sandy, who read commonplace and sordid desertion into the circumstance, strove to dissuade her from her trip to San Francisco, where Neil Bonner was supposed to live when he was at home. And having striven, he made her comfortable, bought her tickets and saw her off, the while smiling in her face and muttering, "damshame," into his beard.

With roar and rumble, through daylight and dark, swaying and lurching between the dawns, soaring into the Winter snows and sinking to Summer valleys, skirting depths, leaping chasms, piercing mountains, Jees Uck and her boy were hurled south. But she had no fear of the iron stallion; nor was she stunned by this masterful civilization of Neil Bonner's people.

It seemed, rather, that she saw with greater clearness the wonder that a man of such god-like race had held her in his arms. The screaming medley of San Francisco, with its restless shipping, belching factories and thundering traffic, did not confuse her; instead, she comprehended swiftly the pitiful sordidness of Twenty Mile and the skin-lodged Toyaat village. And she looked down at the boy who clutched her hand and wondered that she had borne him by such a man.

She paid the hack-driver five prices and went up the stone steps to Neil Bonner's front door. A slant-eyed Japanese parleyed with her for a fruitless space, then led her inside and disappeared. She remained in the hall, which to her simple fancy seemed to be the guest-room—the show-place wherein were arrayed all the household treasures, with the frank purpose of parade and dazzlement. The walls and ceiling were of oiled and paneled redwood. The floor was more glassy than glare-ice, and she sought standing place on one of the great skins that gave a sense of security to the polished surface. A huge fireplace—almost an extravagant fireplace, she deemed it—yawned in the farther wall. A flood of light, mellowed by stained glass, fell across the room, and from the far end came the white gleam of a marble figure.

This much she saw, and more, when the slant-eyed servant led the way past another room—of which she caught a fleeting glance—and into a third, both of which dimmed the brave show of the entrance-hall. And to her eyes the great house seemed to hold out a promise of endless similar rooms. There was such length and breadth to them, and the ceilings were so far away! For the first time since her advent into the white man's civilization, a feeling of awe laid hold of her. Neil, her Neil, lived in this house, breathed the air of it, and laid down at night and slept! It was beautiful, all this that she saw, and it pleased her; but she felt, also, the wisdom and mastery behind. It was the concrete expression

of power in terms of beauty, and it was the power that she unerringly divined.

And then came a woman, queenly tall, crowned with a glory of hair that was like a golden sun. She seemed to come toward Jees Uck as a ripple of music across still water; her sweeping garment itself a song, her body playing rhythmically beneath. Jees Uck was herself a man-compeller. There were Oche Ish and Imego and Hah Yo and Wy Nooch, to say nothing of Neil Bonner and John Thompson and other white men who had looked upon her and felt her power. But she gazed upon the wide blue eyes and rose-white skin of this woman who advanced to meet her, and she measured her with woman's eyes, looking through man's eyes; and as a man-compeller she felt herself diminish and grow insignificant before this radiant and flashing creature.

"You wish to see my husband?" the woman asked; and Jees Uck gasped at the liquid silver of a voice that had never sounded harsh cries at snarling wolf-dogs, nor moulded itself to a guttural speech, nor toughened in storm and frost and camp-smoke.

"No," Jees Uck answered, slowly and gropingly, in order that she might do justice to her English. "I come to see Neil Bonner."

"He is my husband," the woman laughed.

Then it was true! John Thompson had not lied that bleak February day, when she laughed proudly and shut the door in his face. As she had thrown Amos Pentley across her knee and ripped her knife into the air, so she felt impelled to spring upon this woman and bear her back and down, and tear the life out of her fair body. But Jees Uck was thinking quickly and gave no sign, and Kitty Bonner little dreamed how intimately she had for an instant been related with sudden death.

Jees Uck nodded her head that she understood, and Kitty Bonner ex-

plained that Neil was expected at any moment. Then they sat down on ridiculously comfortable chairs, and Kitty sought to entertain her strange visitor, and Jees Uck strove to help her.

"You knew my husband in the North?" Kitty asked once.

"Sure. I wash um clothes," Jees Uck had answered, her English abruptly beginning to grow atrocious.

"And this is your boy? I have a little girl."

Kitty caused her daughter to be brought, and, while the children, after their manner, struck an acquaintance, the mothers indulged in the talk of mothers and drank tea from cups so fragile that Jees Uck feared lest hers should crumble to pieces between her fingers. Never had she seen such cups, so delicate and dainty. In her mind she compared them with the woman who poured the tea, and there uprose in contrast the gourds and pannikins of the Toyaat village and the clumsy mugs of Twenty Mile, to which she likened herself. And in such fashion and such terms, the problem presented itself. She was beaten. There was a woman other than herself better fitted to bear and upbring Neil Bonner's children. Just as his people exceeded her people, so did his womenkind exceed her. They were the man-compellers, as their men were the world-compellers. She looked at the rose-white tenderness of Kitty Bonner's skin and remembered the sun-beat on her own face. Likewise she looked from brown hand to white—the one, work-worn and hardened by whip-handle and paddle, the other as guiltless of toil and soft as a new-born babe's. And, for all the obvious softness and apparent weakness, Jees Uck looked into the blue eyes and saw the mastery she had seen in Neil Bonner's eyes and in the eyes of Neil Bonner's people.

"Why, it's Jees Uck!" Neil Bonner said, when he entered. He said it calmly, with even a ring of joyful cordiality, coming over to her and shaking both her hands, but looking

into her eyes with a worry in his own which she understood.

"Hello, Neill!" she said. "You look much good."

"Fine, fine, Jees Uck," he answered, heartily, though secretly studying Kitty for some sign of what had passed between the two. Yet he knew his wife too well, even though the worst had passed, to expect such a sign.

"Well, I can't say how glad I am to see you," he went on. "What's happened? Did you strike a mine? And when did you get in?"

"Oo-a, I get in to-day," she replied, her voice instinctively seeking its guttural parts. "I no strike it, Neil. You know Cap'n Markheim, Unalaska? I cook, his house, long time. No spend money. Bime-by, plenty. Pretty good, I think, go down and see White Man's Land. Very fine, White Man's Land, very fine," she added.

Her English puzzled him, for Sandy and he had sought, constantly, to better her speech, and she had proved an apt pupil. Now it seemed that she had sunk back into her race. Her face was guileless, stolidly guileless, giving no cue. Kitty's untroubled brow likewise baffled him. What had happened? How much had been said? and how much guessed?

While he wrestled with these questions and while Jees Uck wrestled with her problem—never had he looked so wonderful and great—a silence fell.

"To think that you knew my husband in Alaska!" Kitty said, softly.

Knew him! Jees Uck could not forbear a glance at the boy she had borne him, and his eyes followed hers mechanically to the window where were the two children. The sight was to him as a blow between the eyes. An iron band seemed to tighten across his forehead. His knees went weak and his heart leaped up and pounded like another fist against his breast. His boy! He had never dreamed it!

Little Kitty Bonner, fairy-like in gauzy lawn, with pinkest of cheeks and bluest of dancing eyes, arms out-

stretched and lips puckered in invitation, was striving to kiss the boy. And the boy, lean and lithe, sun-beaten and browned, skin-clad and in hair-fringed and hair-tufted *mucluks* that showed the wear of the sea and rough work, coolly withstood her advances, his body straight and stiff with the peculiar erectness common to children of savage people. A stranger in a strange land, unabashed and unafraid, he appeared more like an untamed animal, silent and watchful, his black eyes flashing from face to face, quiet so long as quiet endured, but prepared to spring and fight and tear and scratch for life, at the first sign of danger.

The contrast between boy and girl was striking, but not pitiful. There was too much strength in the boy for that, waif that he was of the generations of Shpack, Spike O'Brien and Bonner. In his features, clean-cut as a cameo and almost classic in their severity, there was the power and achievement of his father, and his grandfather, and the one known as the Big Fat, who was captured by the Sea People and escaped to Kamchatka.

Neil Bonner fought his emotion down, swallowed it down and choked over it, though his face smiled with good humor and the joy with which one meets a friend.

"Your boy, eh, Jees Uck?" he said. And then, turning to Kitty: "Handsome fellow! He'll do something with those two hands of his in this our world."

Kitty nodded concurrence. "What is your name?" she asked.

The young savage flashed his quick eyes upon her and dwelt over her for a space, seeking out, as it were, the motive beneath the question.

"Neil," he answered, deliberately, when the scrutiny had satisfied him.

"Injun talk," Jees Uck interposed, glibly manufacturing language on the spur of the moment. "Him Injun talk, *nee-al*, all the same 'cracker.' Him baby, him like cracker; him cry for cracker. Him say '*nee-al*', '*nee-al*', all time him say '*nee-al*'."

Then I say that um name. So um name all time Nee-al."

Never did sound more blessed fall upon Neil Bonner's ear than that lie from Jees Uck's lips. It was the cue, and he knew there was reason for Kitty's untroubled brow.

"And his father?" Kitty asked.
"He must be a fine man."

"Oo-a, yes," was the reply. "Um father fine man. Sure!"

"Did you know him, Neil?" queried Kitty.

"Know him? Most intimately," Neil answered, and harked back to dreary Twenty Mile and the man alone in the silence with his thoughts.

And here might well end the story of Jees Uck, but for the crown she put upon her renunciation. When she returned to the North to dwell in her grand log-house, John Thompson found that the P. C. Company could make a shift somehow to carry on its business without his valuable aid. Also, the new agent and the succeeding agents, received instructions that the woman Jees Uck should be given whatsoever goods and grub she desired, in whatsoever quantities she ordered, and that no charge be placed upon the books. Further, the company paid yearly to the woman Jees Uck a pension of five thousand dollars.

When he had attained suitable age, Father Champreau laid hands upon the boy, and the time was not long when Jees Uck received letters regu-

larly from the Jesuit college in Maryland. Later on these letters came from Italy, and still later from France. And in the end there returned to Alaska one Father Neil, a man mighty for good in the land, who loved his mother and who ultimately went into a wider field and rose to high authority in the order.

Jees Uck was a young woman when she went back into the North, and men still looked upon her and yearned. But she lived straight, and no breath was ever raised save in commendation. She stayed for a while with the good sisters at Holy Cross, where she learned to read and write and became versed in practical medicine and surgery. After that she returned to her grand log-house and gathered about her the young girls of the Toyaat village, to show them the way of their feet in the world. It is neither Protestant nor Catholic, this school in the house built by Neil Bonner for Jees Uck, his wife; but the missionaries of all the sects look upon it with equal favor. The latch-string is always out, and tired prospectors and trail-weary men turn aside from the flowing river or frozen trail, to rest there for a space and be warm by her fire. And down in the States Kitty Bonner is pleased at the interest her husband takes in Alaskan education and the large sums he devotes to that purpose; and, though she often smiles and chaffs, deep down and secretly she is but the prouder of him.



THE WAVES, TOO

THE beach's Sunday quiet's oft
Disturbed by merry-makers;
Down on the seashore, e'en the waves
Are surely Sabbath-breakers.



A MAN'S worst enemy is generally himself, but a woman's is usually her "best friend."

THE BEAUTIFUL

By Marvin Dana

WHAT is the beautiful?
My spirit soared in the calm night air
And saw a mountain spire that rose
Aloft toward heaven, trending far,
A soundless symbol, still and fair,
The peace of ages in its pose.
Soft splendors shone from one lone star,
Its chastened beams the only light
That dawned upon my raptured sight—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?
My spirit flew with the darting gale
And saw the surge of a shoreless sea,
Where the wild waves wantoned in ceaseless power,
As pulse of life that ne'er shall fail.
My spirit looked afar from me
And saw in the dusk of the morning hour
A stately ship, whose sails were white
With the unrisen sun's first light—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?
My spirit drowsed on a perfumed plain
And saw a splendor of color-schemes,
Inwrought of blossoms that swung and swayed
In prisma'd glories 'neath kisses of rain,
As tinted signs of a soul's glad dreams.
The flowers flaunted the breeze that played,
While out from the mist-strewn dark of the sky
One sunbeam stole as the clouds passed by—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?
My spirit poised in endless space,
With naught to lose and naught to keep,
In a negative cosmos of emptiness.
And there was nothing, nor time nor place,
But one dull dream of eternal sleep,
A languor of the limitless.
So brooded in my soul soft peace,
The bliss that dawns when all things cease—
And this was beautiful.

What is the beautiful?
 My spirit looked in the heavenly span
 And saw a stately and splendid thing,
 A form of graces and loveliness,
 Which from far depths below began
 A lofty flight on viewless wing;
 Its very passing seemed to bless.
 With glories crowned, with virtues shod,
 A soul flew, seeking love—and God!—
 This was the beautiful.



THE CAPRICIOUSNESS OF MEMORY

DOWN on the shifting sands of life where the waves of time wash in, a man and a boy rested one day. Presently, strolling along the beach came a woman, tall and very like a goddess. Now and then she would stoop to the sands and pick up something.

As she passed them, the man uncovered, and she smiled softly in return.
 "Who is she, father?" asked the boy.
 "That is Memory," replied the man.
 "And what is she doing—this Memory?"

"She is gathering treasures from the sands of life to store in her curious, big cabinet."

"Ah!" said the boy, resting his dimpled chin in the palms of his hands and watching her closely. Then he exclaimed:

"But, father, look, how strangely she selects! Do you see that exquisite, rosy shell she has just passed? Why did she not pick it up, instead of that ugly little clam-shell? And there! that pebble by the sea-weed, which shines like a diamond—why did she not take that, instead of the slimy sea-weed?"

The man shook his head and smiled sadly.

"My son," he said, "Memory is capricious; you cannot tell what treasures she will select for her storehouse, or what things she will reject. Nevertheless, though we may not understand, there is a method in her madness; she has a scale of her own by which she judges the things that are to go into her cabinet. Be sure of that."

In after years the boy, grown to manhood, wondered why he remembered this incident, but forgot even the name of the big bank president who was his father's guest at dinner that night.

VIRGINIA LEILA WENTZ.



A POINT IN MANNERS

A SELF-RESPECTING horse dines table d'oat;
 Salle à manger goes straight to his heart;
 But never ask him (this 'tis well to note)
 To take his dinner with you à la cart.

A MAN AND A MAID

By Alice Stead Binney

"JENNIE!"

"Well, John?" quietly.

"How long is this sort of thing to last?"

"What sort of thing?" too innocently.

"This flirting with every new fellow that comes along."

"I didn't!" quite ungrammatically.

"You—" he did not say "did" because he caught her expectant look—"danced at least half the dances last night with that Throop, or Trope, or Tripe—or whatever his name may be."

"John, I've always told you I would give up dancing altogether if you wished." Her tone was mild and her inflection rising.

"I don't ask you to give it up. But it certainly is like flirting to pick out one partner—"

"I didn't pick him out."

"No; but you let him pick *you* out willingly enough."

"Well, Mr. Thorpe is a good dancer." She smiled, reminiscently.

"Well, if any jumping jackanapes that can shuffle his feet to rag-time can make you so much happier than I can—"

"Don't be a fool, John!"

"That's just the truth! I am a fool—you've made me a fool—and, not content with that, you hold me up as a fool to be laughed at by your friends—and I won't stand it." His tone was forcible and his inflection falling.

"Are you jealous, John?"

"Not of that kind of chap. But if you've got to treat me like—nothing—because I can't dance—"

"Why, I went to supper with you and let at least four dances go by while we talked in the cozy corner."

"Well, I think I'd better not go to any more dances; I'm only a wall-flower anyway, and I don't like the idiotic grin on the men's faces when they come to take you away."

"Oh, I see! My mother always told me it was safe enough to walk on a man's feelings, so long as you did not touch his vanity."

Then John bolted through the door and slammed it behind him. And Jennie? She sighed and then smiled—and fretted not at all.

'Twas only "The Way of a Man with a Maid."

"John!"

"Yes, dear!"

"You're late to-night."

"I know. I was late leaving the office."

"What kept you?"

"I was busy—and then Tom came in."

"Oh, Tom!" comprehensively. "Did you get the cards for me?"

"No—er—I'm sorry, dear, but I—"

"Forgot them, I suppose. Never mind. Was Tom after you to go fishing to-morrow?"

"Yes, but—"

"Oh, don't apologize! I might have expected it. Three Sundays with no fishing must have nearly killed you. I knew something was making you miserable! And I have known it was a mistake for you to be engaged to a girl that can't stand the water!"

"But I didn't say I'd go!"

"No?" sarcastically. "Why did you keep Tom in suspense?"

"I told him I knew you'd be mad if I went."

"Indeed! So you let Tom into the secret of your sufferings from my selfishness! I hope he was properly indignant for your sake!"

"No; he only said he had hardly expected I'd go, but as I had not been at all this Summer, and he and George had good sport last week——"

"Well, let me tell you, you are welcome to go fishing to-morrow and every other Sunday as long as you live, so far as I'm concerned. And I don't intend that your friends shall need to be sorry for you, or make allowances for you on my account."

Then she gathered up her skirts with a dainty flip and strolled down the path into the shadows. And John? He relighted his cigar, put both feet on the railing and smiled up at the stars.

'Twas only "The Way of a Maid with a Man."

"Jennie!"

"Yes, John!"

"Aren't you coming back to the porch?"

"I think not—to-night."

"Well, say good night to me here, then."

"Why, you're not going, are you?"

She stood up; then sat down again.

The rustic seat nestled against the trunk of the big old oak and was irresistibly inviting.

He sat down alongside of her and, unrebuked, stroked her hair with one hand and with the other gathered up both of hers.

"I know it is not very late, but I am tired. I had better go." He was very gentle.

"Oh, John! I believe you're not well; that hot office is so bad for you these long days. But to-morrow will put you right."

"To-morrow?"

"Yes; I found Bobby down here and I sent him over to Tom's house to tell him you would surely meet him at the dock in the morning. Then we'll have a moonlight drive after tea."

It was hard to get through that long speech without interruption, but she managed it.

"I forgot to tell you"—he was going at last—"I have chartered the launch to take us to the Yacht Club dance; it will get you there as early as driving, and we'll have the sail as well."

"But I told the girls I wasn't going, John. I would just as soon not."

"You must go, dear. And those two madcap sisters of mine declare that with your help I could be made to two-step quite decently by the fifteenth."

"Oh, John!"

'Twas ever "The Way of a Man and a Maid!"



FORETHOUGHT

WHEN I sit before the fire in my hoary-headed age,
When I may not read because I cannot see the printed page;
When I may not dine off terrapin, or canvas-back, nor try
A new brand of champagne, because dyspepsia hovers by;
When I may no longer whisper in a pretty woman's ear,
"I love you!"—for her answer I shall be too deaf to hear—
What if Memory has no gladness from that past wherein I live,
When the only pleasures left me are the joys my memories give?

Thus I answer all the critics who are mocking at my ways:
Let me have a past to dwell on in the Winter of my days!

LOUISE WINTER.

“AS THE COMING OF DAWN”

By James Branch Cabell

“O H, I say, you know!” observed Billy Woods, as he finished the sixth chapter of “Ashtaroth’s Lacquey,” and flung down the book.

“Rot, utter rot,” assented Mr. Charteris, pleasantly; “puerile and futile trifling with the fragments of the seventh commandment, as your sturdy common sense instantly detected. In fact,” he added, hopefully, “I think it’s quite bad enough to go into a tenth edition.”

Coming from the author, this should have been fairly conclusive; but Billy refused to be comforted. “Look here, Jack!” said he, pathetically, “why don’t you brace up and write something—decent?”

Charteris flicked the ashes from his cigarette, with conscious grace. “Is not impropriety the spice of literature?” he queried, softly. “Sybarite that I am, I have descended to this that I might furnish butter for my daily bread!” He refilled his glass and held the sparkling drink for a moment against the light. “This time next year,” said he, dreamily, “I shall be able to afford cake; for I shall have written ‘As the Coming of Dawn.’”

Mr. Woods sniffed, and refilled his glass likewise.

“For the reign of subtle immorality,” sighed Mr. Charteris, “is well-nigh over. Already the augurs of the pen wink as they fable of a race of men evilly scintillant in talk and gracefully erotic. We know that this, alas, cannot be, and that in real life our peccadilloes shrink into dreary vistas of divorce-cases and the police-court, and that crime has lost its

splendor. We sin very carelessly—sordidly, at times—and artistic wickedness is rare. It is a pity; life was once a scarlet volume scattered with misty-coated demons; it is now a yellow journal, wherein our virtues are the not infrequent misprints, and our vices the hackneyed formulas of journalists. Yes, it is a pity!”

“Dear Jack,” remonstrated Mr. Woods, “you are sadly *passe*; that pose is of the Beardsley period and went out many magazines ago.”

“The point is well taken,” admitted Mr. Charteris, “for our life of to-day is already reflected—faintly, I grant you—in the best-selling books. We have passed through the period of a slavish admiration for wickedness and wide margins; our quondam decadents now snigger in a parody of primeval innocence, and many things are forgiven the latter-day poet if his botany be irreproachable. Indeed, it is quite time; for we have tossed over the contents of every closet in the *ménage à trois*. And I —*moi, qui vous parle*—I am wearied of hansom-cabs and the flaring lights of Broadway, and henceforth I shall demonstrate the beauty of pastoral innocence.”

“Saul among the prophets,” suggested Mr. Woods, helpfully.

“Quite so,” assented Mr. Charteris; “and my first prophecy will be ‘As the Coming of Dawn.’”

Mr. Woods tapped his forehead significantly. “Mad, quite mad!” said he, in parenthesis.

“I shall be idyllic,” continued Mr. Charteris, sweetly. “I shall write of the ineffable glory of first love; I

shall babble of green fields and the keen odors of Spring and the shame-faced countenances of lovers met after last night's kissing. It will be the story of love that stirs blindly in the hearts of maids and youths, and does not know that it is love—the love that manhood has half forgotten and that youth has not skill to write of. But I shall write its story as it has never been written before; and I shall make a great book of it, that will go into thousands and thousands of editions. Before heaven, I will!" He brought his fist down emphatically on the table.

"H'm!" said Mr. Woods, dubiously; "going back to renew associations with your first love? You'll find her grandchildren terribly in the way, you know."

"It is imperative," said Mr. Charteris, shortly, "for the scope of my book that I should view life through youthful eyes."

Mr. Woods whistled softly. "'Honorable young gentleman,'" he murmured, as to himself, "'desires to meet attractive young lady. Object: to learn how to be idyllic in four-hundred pages.'"

There was no answer.

"I say, Jack," queried Mr. Woods, "do you think this—this sort of thing is fair to the girl? Isn't it a little cold-blooded?"

Charteris smiled, somewhat evasively. "To-morrow," said he, with firmness, "I leave Greenfield Springs in search of '*As the Coming of Dawn*'."

"Look here," said Mr. Woods; "if you start on a tour of the country, looking for assorted dawns and idylls, it'll end in my bailing you out of the lock-up. You take a liver-pill and go to bed."

II

CHARTERIS notified the hotel-clerk and the newspaper correspondents next morning that Greenfield was about to be bereft of the presence of the distinguished novelist. Then, as his train did not leave till night, he resolved to

be bored on horseback, rather than on the golf-links, and had Chloris summoned from the stables for a final investigation of the country roads thereabouts.

Chloris elected to follow a new route this afternoon shortly after leaving the hotel grounds, and Charteris, knowing by long experience that any questioning of this decision could but result in undignified defeat, assented. Thus it came about that they trotted down a green country lane and came to a narrow brook, which babbled across the roadway and was overhung with thick foliage that lisped and whispered cheerfully in the placid light of the declining sun. It was there that the germ of "*As the Coming of Dawn*" was found.

For Charteris had fallen into a reverie, and Chloris, taking advantage of this, twitched the reins from his hand and proceeded to satisfy her thirst in a manner that was rather too noisy to be quite good form. Charteris sat in patience, idly observing the sparkling reflection of the sunlight on the water. Then Chloris snorted, as something rustled through the underbrush, and Charteris, turning, perceived a vision.

The vision was in white, with a maddening profusion of open-work. There were blue ribbons connected with it. There were also black eyes, of the almond-shaped, heavy-lidded sort that Charteris had thought existed only in Lely's pictures, and great coils of brown hair that was gold where the chequered sunlight fell upon it, and two lips that were very red. He was filled with a deep pity for his tired horse and a resolve that for this once her thirst should be quenched. Thereupon, he lifted his cap hastily, but Chloris scrambled to the other bank, spluttered, and had carried him a quarter of a mile before Charteris announced to the evening air that he was a fool and that Chloris was various picturesque but uncomplimentary things. Then he smiled, equivocally.

"Dainty little Philistine!" said he.

After this they retraced their steps, Charteris peering anxiously about the road.

"Pardon me," said Charteris, subsequently; "have you seen anything of a watch—a small gold one, set with pearls?"

"Heavens!" said the vision, sympathetically, "what a pity! Are you sure it fell here?"

"I don't seem to have it about me," answered Charteris, with cryptic significance. He searched about his pockets, with a puckered brow. "And as we stopped here—" He looked inquiringly into the water.

"From this side," observed the vision, impersonally, "there is less glare from the brook."

Having tied Chloris to a swinging limb, Charteris sat down contentedly. The vision moved hurriedly, lest he should be crowded.

"It might be further up the road," she suggested, demurely.

"I must have left it at the hotel," observed Charteris, rapt in meditation.

"You might look," said she, peering into the water.

"Forever!" assented he, rather fatuously.

The vision flushed. "I didn't mean—" she began.

"I did," quoth Charteris, "every word of it."

"In that case," said she, rising, "I shall—" A frown wrinkled her brow; then a deep, curved dimple performed a similar office for her cheek, as Charteris sighed pathetically. "I wonder—" said she, with some hesitation.

"Of course not," said he, composedly; "there's nobody about."

The vision sat down. "You mentioned your sanatorium?" quoth she, sweetly.

"The Asylum of Love," said Charteris; "discharged—under a false impression—as cured; and sent to paradise."

"Oh!" said she.

"It is," said he, defiant.

She looked about her. "The woods are beautiful," she conceded, softly.

"They form an admirable background," said he, with some irrelevance. "It is a veritable Eden, before the coming of the snake."

"Before?" queried she, dubiously.

"Undoubtedly," said Charteris. He felt his ribs, in meditative wise. "And just after—"

"It is quite time," said she, judicially, "for me to go home."

"It is not good," pleaded Charteris, "for man to be alone."

"I have heard," said she, "that the—almost any one can cite Scripture to his purpose."

Charteris thrust out a foot for inspection. "No suggestion of a hoof," said he; "no odor of brimstone, and my inoffensive name is John Charteris."

"Of course," she submitted, virtuously, "I could never think of making your acquaintance in this irregular fashion; and, therefore, of course, I could not think of telling you that my name is Marian Winwood."

"Of course not," agreed Charteris; "it would be highly improper."

There was an interval. Charteris smiled.

"I am country-bred," said she, in flushed explanation; "and you are—"

"A citizen of no mean city," he admitted. "I am from New York!"

"—horrid," finished she.

Charteris groaned, miserably.

"But I have been to New York," said she.

"Ah?" said he, vacantly. "Eden Musée?"

"Yes," said she, with ill-concealed pride.

Charteris groaned once again.

"And it is quite time for me to go to supper," she concluded, with some lack of sequence.

"Look here!" remonstrated he; "it isn't six yet." He exhibited his watch to support this statement.

"Oh!" she cried, with wide, indignant eyes.

"I—I mean—" stammered he.

She rose to her feet.

"—I'll explain—"

"I do not care to listen to any explanations."

"—to-morrow."

"You will not." This was said very firmly. "And I hope you will have the kindness to keep away from these woods; for I always walk here in the afternoon." Then, with an indignant toss of the head, the vision disappeared.

Charteris whistled. Subsequently, he galloped back to the hotel.

"See here!" said he, to the hotel-clerk; "how long does this place keep open?"

"Season closes October fifteenth, sir."

"All right; I'll need my room till then. Here, boy! See if my luggage has been taken to the station; and, if it has, send it back—Charteris, Room 249—and be quick!"

III

"It will be very dreadful," sighed she, in a tired voice; "for I shall come here every afternoon. And there will be only ghosts in the woods—wistful, pathetic ghosts of dead days—and I shall be very lonely."

"Dear," said Charteris, "is it not something to have been happy? It has been such a wonderful Summer, and come what may, nothing—nothing—can rob us of its least golden moment. And it is only for a little."

"You will come back?" said she, half-doubtfully.

"Yes," said Charteris, and felt the black waves of degradation and unutterable self-contempt sweep over his soul, like a flood, and wash the manhood from it. "You wonderful, elfin creature, I shall come back—to your home, that I have seen only from a distance. I don't believe you live there—you live in some great, gnarled oak hereabouts, and at night its bark uncloses to set you free, and you and your sisters dance out the satyrs' hearts in the moonlight. I know you are a dryad—a wonderful, laughing, clear-eyed dryad strayed out of the golden age."

"Alas!" said she, sadly; "I am only a girl, dear—a very weak, frightened

girl, with very little disposition to laughter just now. For you are going away. Oh, Jack, you have meant so much to me! The world is so different since you have come, and I am so happy and so miserable that—that I am afraid." An impossible, infinitesimal handkerchief stole upward to two great, sparkling eyes.

"Dear!" said Charteris. And this remark appeared to meet the requirements of the situation.

Then there was a silence which he devoted to a consideration of the pitiful littleness of his soul. The Autumn woods flushed and burned about them; there was already the damp odor of decaying leaves in the air. The whinnying of Chloris smote the stillness like an impertinence. The Summer was ended; but "As the Coming of Dawn" was practically complete.

It was not the book that Charteris had planned, but a far greater one that was scarcely his. There was no word written, as yet. But for two months he had viewed life through Marian Winwood's eyes; day by day, his half-formed, tentative ideas had been laid before her with elaborate carelessness, to be approved, altered or rejected, as she decreed, until at last they were welded into a perfect, compact whole that was a book. Bit by bit, they had planned it, he and she; and, as Charteris dreamed of it as it should be, his brain was fired with exultation, and he defied his soul and swore that the book, for which he had pawned his self-respect, was worth—well worth—the price that he had paid. This was in Marian's absence.

"Dear!" said she.

Charteris looked up into her eyes. They were filled with a tender, unutterable confidence that thrilled him like physical cold. "Marian," said he, simply, "I shall never come back."

Her eyes widened a trifle, but she did not seem to comprehend.

"Have you never wondered," said he, hoarsely, "that I have never kissed you?"

"Yes," she answered. Her voice was emotionless.

"And yet—yet—" Charteris sprang to his feet. "Dear God, how I have longed! Yesterday, only yesterday, as I read to you from the verses I had made to other women, those women that are but pale, colorless shadows by the side of your stanch, vivid beauty—and you listened wonderingly and said the proper things and then lapsed into dainty boredom—how I longed to take you in my arms, and quicken your calm Philistine blood with my kisses! You knew—you must have known! Did you sleep last night?" he queried, a sharp note in his voice.

"No," said she, dully.

"Nor I. All night I tossed in sick, fevered dreams of you. I am mad for love of you. And yet only once have I kissed—your hand. Dear God, your hand!" His voice quavered, effectively.

"Yes," said she; "I remember."

"I have struggled; I have conquered this madness—for madness it is. We can laugh together and be excellent friends—no more. We have laughed, have we not, dear, a whole Summer through? Now comes the ending. Ah, I have seen you puzzling over my meaning ere this—now follows a laugh."

She smiled, stupidly.

"For we can laugh together—that is all. We are not mates. You were born to be the wife of a strong man and the mother of his clean-blooded children, and you and your sort will inherit the earth and make the laws for us poor weaklings who dream and scribble and paint. We are not mates. But you have been very kind to me. I thank you and say good-bye; and I pray that I may never see you after to-day."

There was something of magnificence in the egotism of the man and his complacent depreciation of his artistic temperament; it was a barrier he recognized unquestioningly; and with equal plainness he perceived the petty motives that now caused him to point it out to Marian. His lips

curled half in mockery of himself as he framed the bitter smile he felt the situation demanded; but he was fired with the part he was playing, and half-belief crept into his mind that Marian was created chiefly for the purpose she had already served. He regarded her shrunken form as through the eyes of future readers of his biography. She represented an episode in his life. He pitied her sincerely, and under all, his lower nature, held in leash for two months past, chuckled and grinned and leaped at the thought of a holiday.

She rose to her feet. "Good-bye," said she.

"You—you understand, dear?" he queried, tenderly.

"Yes," she answered; "I understand—not what you have just told me, for in that, of course, you have lied. But I understand you, Jack, dear. Ah, believe me, you are not an uncommon type, a type not strong enough to live life healthily—just strong enough to dabble in life, to trifle with emotions, to experiment with other people's lives. Indeed, I am not angry, Jack, dear; I am only—sorry; and the Summer has been very happy."

IV

CHARTERIS returned to New York and wrote "*As the Coming of Dawn*."

He spent nine months in this. His work at first was mere copying of the completed book that had already existed in his brain; but when it was transcribed therefrom, he wrote and rewrote, cast and recast each paragraph of the fantastic, jeweled English that had made him the despair of his admirers. It was the work of his life; it was beautiful and strong and clean; and he dandled the child of his brain tenderly for a while and arrayed it in perfect garments and clothed it in words that had a taste in the mouth and would one day lend an aroma to the printed page, and rejoiced shamelessly in that which he had done. Then he went out and sought

the luxury of a Turkish bath, and in the morning, after a rub-down and an ammonia cocktail, awoke to the fact that there were breakfasts in the world that sent forth savory odors and awaited the coming of ravenous humanity.

A week later, he sent for Billy Woods and informed him that he, Charteris, was a genius, waved certain type-written pages to demonstrate the fact. He added, as an afterthought, that he was a cad. Subsequently, he read divers portions of "As the Coming of Dawn" aloud, and Mr. Woods sipped Chianti of a rare flavor and listened.

"Look here!" said Mr. Woods, suddenly; "have you seen 'The Imperial Votaress'?"

Mr. Charteris frowned petulantly. "Don't know the lady," said he.

"She's advertised on half the posters in town," said Mr. Woods. "And it's the book of the year. And it's your book."

Mr. Charteris laid down his manuscript. "I beg your pardon?" said he.

"Your book," repeated Mr. Woods, firmly; "scarcely a hair's difference between them, except in the names."

"H'm!" observed Mr. Charteris, in a careful voice. "Who wrote it?"

"Marian Winwood," said Mr. Woods.

"Eh?" said Mr. Charteris. "Name sounds familiar, somehow."

"Dear me!" remonstrated Billy. "Why, she wrote 'A Bright Particular Star,' you know, and 'The Acolytes,' and—and lots of others." Billy is not literary in his tastes.

The author of "As the Coming of Dawn" swallowed a glass of Chianti at a gulp.

"Of course," said he, slowly, "I can't, in my position, run the risk of being charged with plagiarism."

Thereupon, he threw the manuscript into the open fire, which his thin blood and love of the picturesque rendered necessary, even in May.

"Oh, look here!" cried Billy, catching up the papers. "It—it's infernally good, you know! Can't you—can't you fix it—change it a bit?"

Mr. Charteris took the manuscript and replaced it firmly among the embers. "As you justly observe," said he, "it is infernally good. It is much better than anything else I shall ever write."

"Why, then—" said Billy.

"Why, then," said Mr. Charteris, "the only thing that remains to do is to read 'The Imperial Votaress.'"



AN OPEN QUESTION

THE band around his Summer hat he lent her for a belt;
So when she gave it back again he saw the little welt
Her buckle had inflicted, and he whispered, bending low,
"If I but look on this, dear one, your measure I shall know."

With just the least suspicion of annoyance in her pout,
"Is that the only way," she said, "you have of finding out?"

HELEN CHAUNCEY.



HE who never smiles should not on that account consider himself the centre of gravity.

AN APPOINTMENT

By Catharine Young Glen

THE GRAMERCY,
GRAMERCY PARK.

M Y DEAR MR. BLUNT:

It was impossible for me to meet you yesterday. I am very sorry! Will leave all explanations till I see you.

Sincerely yours,

CECILIA VAIL.

November the nineteenth.

Blunt sat at his desk in the office on Nassau street, that morning, with the dainty missive, just opened, in his hand. If he bore the marks of having passed a sleepless night, it was not from dissipation. The cause was, briefly, this: He had had an engagement to dine, on the previous evening, with the young lady whose name was signed to the note, and, by one of those unaccountable tricks of which the mind is sometimes guilty, had forgotten it.

Nothing, in years, had so disturbed him. A hundred times, if once, had he reviewed the matter, striving both to get the clue to his inexplicable blunder and, most naturally, to find for it a possible excuse. His memory, now unnecessarily active, was able to call up a wealth of detail. It was just ten days ago when he made the appointment, as he sat with Miss Vail in the little parlor in Gramercy Park. He could remember, to the shadows the lamp cast upon it, the dress she wore and, still more accurately, the changes of her pretty face. He remembered—that he could forget anything with which she was connected!—her very words, and his.

They had been speaking of a certain restaurant on the East Side, much visited by the novelty-seeker. Miss

Vail had never been there, and they were both young enough to be enthusiastic over such things. He had offered to take her at his first opportunity, which had happened to be the evening in question, and they were to meet at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, at six, the place most convenient for her as she came from a previous engagement.

This, their intended sally into bohemia, had been down in his mental calendar ever since as one of the bright spots ahead. When he now asked himself what could have driven it from his mind, he had nothing to set over against the question but a blank. Was it the awful rush of yesterday? the fact that he had bungled that important errand in the morning? that he had been bothered with that Fraternity matter in the afternoon? Of one thing only he was certain—that the fact remained. He had eaten his dinner at the usual place and in the usual solitary way, without an inkling of the little tragedy in which, by so doing, he was playing the leading part.

Through the long night hours that elapsed between the moment when his sin of omission first dawned on him and daylight, he had tortured himself with conjectures as to what her attitude might now be toward him, and with conflicting resolves. His regard for truth and his desire to keep, if possible, her good opinion warred within him. What should he do? Action of some kind was a necessity. Invent an excuse? Tell a falsehood? A dozen eagerly suggested themselves. He might have been de-

tained, unable to send word, taken suddenly ill. She would never know, in all probability, and would continue to respect him as before. But he? The shuttlecock came back again. He would know, and what about respecting himself?

Own up to it? Tell her just how it was? She was high-strung and sensitive, as he knew her, dear little thing! "An awful rush of business," "worry," "unexpected matters coming up." It sounded all very well as he said it—but to her ears? Blunt turned over and punched his pillow to a shapeless heap. With a woman it is fatal to forget!

The morning, however, had brought determination and an aching head. There was no way out like the right way. He would tell the truth. He had taken his place in the office with the explanation and plea, which he intended writing and sending to her, already half-framed. And now, after all his fevered tossings and the bitter, if virtuous, solution wrung from the problem, had come this letter.

"It was impossible for me to meet you yesterday." She herself was not there! Pushing away the papers from before him, despite the fact that the other clerks were bending busily above their desks, he tilted back his chair. "Luck?" screamed one of the voices suddenly beating about his ears. "Was there ever such a piece of luck?"

He read and re-read the little letter, holding it with hands that were not quite steady; then, crushing it back into the envelope, tossed it from him and returned to work with a frowning brow. His gray eyes were obstinate and his jaw was set. But the deeds and mortgages on which he strove to concentrate attention were written over with the wording of the note. His head began to throb again, persistently, and the glare from the skylight made everything seem blurred.

Miss Vail stood alone at one of the windows overlooking Gramercy Park. Behind her the noon sun rev-

eled in a mass of chrysanthemums in a vase on the mantel-shelf, played with a paper-cutter on the table and made a quivering oblong on the floor. Before her the trees spread out their maze of branches, each twig bare and motionless. She held the tassel of the curtain in her hand, twirling it idly. Her eyes, sweet and serious, gazed down into the square.

There was a rap on the door and she started, having been too much occupied with her thoughts to hear the脚步声. To her, "Come in!" a servant entered, one of the maids employed about the house, with an envelope in her hand. "A note, miss," the maid explained, "and the boy is waiting down-stairs in the hall. I told him I would bring it up, as I was coming. There is to be an answer, he says."

The girl went forward and took the letter, glancing quickly at the address. She folded it, drawing it back and forth between her fingers, a faint color showing on her cheek.

"There is to be an answer," she repeated, "and the boy is waiting? Very well, Mary; I am much obliged. You are going back again, you say? Would you mind telling him that I will see him?" She seated herself beside the table. "The answer will be ready in a minute. I will take it down."

The maid nodded and went out, closing the door behind her, and after she had gone the girl sat with elbow on the table and chin on her palm, the letter, unopened, in her lap. She was glad to be alone; her breath was wont to come a little quickly, of late, at sight of that familiar writing. She had never known, perhaps, how much it did mean to her—until just now. A curious expression, as though it might have been unwillingness, played upon her face. She lifted the envelope, tapping it; then, with a sudden resolute motion, caught up the paper-cutter, and with a slip of its edge the boldly written sheet was in her hands.

90 NASSAU STREET.

MY DEAR MISS VAIL:

Do I need say that I was disappointed

not to see you? But spare yourself those explanations. Your word that it was impossible is enough.

I have fixed a penalty, however. Meet me to-day at the same hour and place. Please say "yes" by the messenger. You can't refuse. As always,

Yours,
SYLVESTER BLUNT.

The patch of sun on the floor crept forward; a clock above the mantel ticked loudly on. The little figure still leaned on the table. She seemed to have forgotten that the boy waited below.

There was a sudden rustle of her gown, the quick scrape of a chair, as she took her place before the desk. She tried the point of a gold pen and pulled toward her a sheet of paper, stamped with a dainty monogram, bending above it while the sun paled and a few flakes of the first snow whirled, unheeded, by the window. The chrysanthemums, looking over her shoulder, read:

THE GRAMERCY,
GRAMERCY PARK.

DEAR MR. BLUNT:

Your note is just received. I shall indeed

spare myself, and you, all further explanations. I waited for you at the Fifth Avenue, yesterday, from six until after seven.

I am sorry, but until I can place the same reliance on your word—

She stopped, struck by something in the unfinished sentence. Could she finish it, indeed! His word? If he, perhaps, had not placed quite so much reliance on her own! She laid down the pen and looked hard ahead of her. It was the first time that she had seen the matter from his side.

Pulled by her ruthless fingers, petal after petal of the flower that leaned down farthest dropped on the blotter. She was about to sit in judgment on him for the truth. Was there no apology, in that same light, which he might demand of her? She pushed the falling petals into patterns. She had weighed him in the balance and he had been found wanting—but could she cast it up to him?

She tore up the sheet on which she had written, and took another.

"Come up to-night, instead," she wrote in answer to his letter, "and we will have a talk."



SUCCUMBED

WHEN first I looked in those brown eyes
I felt we'd soon be one,
The strong attachment of my life
Was then and there begun.

Those ivory teeth, the parting lips
No man before had kissed,
All drew me with a mighty strength
Which I could not resist.

And yet, alas for me, I knew
My suit was hopeless, quite;
The one who held me captive was
Her father's bulldog, "Bite."



LOVE ignores time, and time kills love. It's one of the revenges.

SONG OF SELIM'S SWORD

DEEP in the ancient bosom of earth
 The marvelous ore that gave me birth
 For ages slumbered, awaiting the flower
 Of the perfect and predestined hour
 When, fused by the vital force of fire,
 I should shape to a thing for man's desire.

By many a hand was I gripped and swung
 Where the press of battle raged and rung;
 And ever, although my gleam was fair,
 Death hovered where I was poised in air;
 But I never tasted the wine of bliss
 Till Selim grasped me and claimed me his.

At his touch am I like the lightning made,
 And the fiercest foemen flee, afraid;
 Deeply his vengeance-lust I slake;
 Safely he sleeps, for I ever wake;
 And I kindle and thrill with more than pride
 When he clasps me tightly and calls me bride!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.



HE WOULD MAKE A FEINT

PLAYWRIGHT—The star's fainting scene isn't realistic enough.
MANAGER—All right; I'll soon fix that. Just when she's going on I'll give her her two weeks' notice.



HANDICAPPED

MADGE—How is it you're not going out yachting with Charlie again?
DOLLY—It took both his hands to manage the boat.



IT takes all kinds of a world to make some people.

THE YOUTHFULNESS OF WILKINS

By Emery Pottle

A KNOWLEDGE of what the young call life, and what clergymen and elderly leaders of society call the world, is, without doubt, an excellent thing. Under what guise this knowledge shall disport itself is entirely a matter of taste and depends, naturally, on the use to which this valuable acquisition is put.

There is little doubt that Penfield Wilkins possesses more than a modicum of those delicate bits of information regarding the vices and devices of mankind—or, to put it briefly, he knows women.

Miss Wilson has insisted—until recently—that Penfield Wilkins is gifted with a refinement of intuition and a depth of emotion that are almost feminine. And both of these traits, roughly catalogued under the head of tenderness, Miss Wilson declares, endear a man to a woman.

At any rate, when Wilkins began to be known about town he conducted himself in a light-hearted way and on most occasions displayed an infectious gaiety of spirits that won the hearts of women who like amusement—and there are no others worth mentioning—and attracted most men. Whether or not it was, and is, a pose is neither here nor there. Nowadays, it is generally conceded that a good pose is far more desirable than an offensive naturalness.

Miss Wilson, who is much older than Wilkins, took him about with her everywhere—at least, everywhere she was invited—as her protégé, and it is she who named him “the Child.”

Wilkins's appearance at least is

85

not deceitful. He is a slight fellow, of little more than medium height, with a mass of reddish hair and a face that in repose is commonplace, but becomes almost handsome when smiling, and Wilkins smiles frequently. He affects an epigrammatic speech and spends much time in thinking out new combinations of old proverbs. Modern conversation, being made up chiefly of indelicate references to women with a present and men with a past, together with some unimportant criticisms of recent literature and the weather, affords an agreeable opportunity for neat perversions.

But, after all, Penfield Wilkins's most potent charm is his boyish enthusiasm. He looks three-and-twenty and acts nineteen. When pressed closely by kindly men or women with eligible daughters, as to whether he is as young as he seems, he is wont to smile ingenuously. Those who know him best—and, according to all evidences, they are his entire list of acquaintances—assert that he is a full twenty-nine, and only wishes to appear engagingly youthful as an excuse for his *fin-de-siècle* wit and a protection from husbands. This last is probably an assailable bit of information and may be taken for what it is worth.

After Penfield Wilkins had been in New York a twelvemonth or so, he became, as we have said, the suite of Miss Wilson, an unattached lady of perhaps forty-five. With the manner of this occurrence we have no concern—though it is well enough known that, after failing to induce old Money-penny to enter on marriage for the

fourth time, she felt the need of a new environment.

They were to be seen together at every house. Miss Wilson usually arrived with him very late, having an eye to her "entrances." If the function was stupid, they flirted with each other; if there was good hunting and the prospect of a lively chase, they separated and brought down what chance put in their way.

Miss Wilson is possessed of a phenomenal ability to read aright the minds—or, at any rate, the actions—of men and women, especially "the Child's." She grows always with her face to the sun—which to her is society. Hence, up to the time of this story, she was able to hold Wilkins to her side with little fear of his defection.

Elizabeth Grant Torrington—who, after all, ought to know—maintains firmly that, though Wilkins says very little of his ethical possessions, he is endowed with an active conscience and a nice perception that the public does not allow itself to be damned, and inquires with extreme frankness and even impertinence into the life that every one elects to live—whether it be his own or one that is stolen or borrowed. The conscience, she asserts, he deluded himself into thinking he had strangled; the perception certainly became somewhat dulled, and this was another reason why Miss Wilson held him.

The season moved on with complacency and scandal. Penfield Wilkins, in the pride of his youth, moved on with it. In late January the Whitestones gave their studio-dance. Why the Whitestones gave the name studio to the large, somewhat battered-looking room wherein they hold all their evenings—not to mention mornings and luncheons and other little affairs of Mrs. Whitestone's which do not admit of a name—no one ever knew. The avocations of neither Whitestone justify the possession of a studio.

Penfield had come late, as usual, with Miss Wilson. After a few unnecessary words with Mrs. Whitestone

and an epigram to the effect—with a childlike glance at Whitestone and the punch—that the early worm spoils the broth, he wandered over to an inevitable Turkish corner and began to converse vivaciously with Euphemia Van Corliss.

She had just had a spirited passage at arms with Mrs. Whitestone over the possession of a disreputably rich gentleman, who was noted, among other things, for his excellent dinners. Mrs. Whitestone had borne him away in triumph and Euphemia Van Corliss was in a temper.

"My dear," said she, sipping her punch, "how tiresome of the Whitestones to have claret-punch. I loathe it. Dear Clara, she's so occupied trying to live down her good reputation, I dare say she hasn't time to think of sustenance. So cheer me up with a bit of gossip. Child, where have you been lately, and, oh, my dear, between ourselves, don't you think poor Clara Whitestone's face is getting extremely dilapidated?"

"Dear Mrs. Van Corliss," laughed Wilkins, "what charity for their sisters do I behold among women! Now, I should have said it was merely partially restored."

"Penfield, you are too dreadful, really! How can you think of these clever things? And it's really true; I'll tell Van that you——"

At this point Miss Wilson beckoned to the Child. As he rose to go to her, Mrs. Van Corliss—an amiably insistent person of twenty-five—detained him with a sweetly confidential air.

"Penfield!"

"Mrs. Van Corliss!"

"Are you really going to?"

"What?"

"Marry her?"

"Marry whom?"

"Stupid, tell me!"

"My dear Mrs. Van Corliss, tell what?"

"Every one says you are."

"Are what?"

"Why, going to marry Lucy Wilson."

"Good heavens, no!". For a mo-

ment Penfield Wilkins lost his youth. He recovered himself instantly. His boyish laugh bubbled forth quite irresistibly.

"Why, Mrs. Van Corliss, I'm a poor young chap struggling for place and I can afford only the necessities of life."

Euphemia Van Corliss looked unconvincedly at him as he departed. Certain little *nuances* of talk are sometimes lost on her.

"Child," bubbled Lucy Wilson, "come to meet a lovely lady. Elizabeth Grant Torrington, may I present Mr. Wilkins? You may call him 'the Child'; we all do."

Miss Wilson told Whitestone six months later that she felt at the time she was making a mistake to bring those two people together. And when that lady confesses to a mistake you may be sure she regards it as no whit less than a cardinal sin.

"So you are the man I hear so much about wherever I go?" Elizabeth Torrington looked at Wilkins with cool, deep-brown eyes, wherein twinkled a spark of amusement. "So you are the Child? Who gave you that name? No, don't tell me; I don't care to know."

"So you are Elizabeth Grant Torrington? Who gave you that name? No, don't tell me; to speak of one's parents at the Whitestones' is ostentatious."

Penfield Wilkins threw back her speech at her with an audacious air of juvenility. And Miss Torrington laughed. After that they were excellent friends. Indeed, Miss Wilson was compelled twice that evening to break up their comfortable tête-à-têtes. Euphemia Van Corliss told the disreputably rich gentleman—whom she had captured on the rebound—that evidently Elizabeth Grant Torrington was either fooling or being fooled; which remark, though comprehensively covering the major part of all human relations, did not smack of great originality to her companion.

That night in her bedroom, Elizabeth Torrington scrutinized her face in the mirror for a long time. "Not

bad to look at, Elizabeth," she soliloquized, calmly, and began to braid her brown hair for the night. In truth, she was right.

As she was dropping off to sleep she murmured, "I wonder how old he is, really!"

Within two weeks' time Elizabeth Torrington and Penfield Wilkins were to be seen together constantly. He sent her violets daily; she wore them. They walked together, talked together, laughed together. You may be sure that what Whitestone, with his genial mediocrity, called "the bunch," were entirely conversant with the situation. Miss Wilson was kept aware of the cream of it. "My dear Lucy," asserted Euphemia Van Corliss over a friendly cup of tea, "I am perfectly certain he is in love with her. He is not so guileless as he seems. Did you see the way he looked at her at the Martins' last night?"

Lucy Wilson, having both seen and heard at the Martins' more than she desired, answered, "No," in a short tone, and went home.

The Whitestones inclined to the belief—they were under somewhat deep obligations to Miss Wilson—that Miss Torrington was foolishly enamoured of young Wilkins. In payment for this sop of comfort they received tickets to Miss Wilson's Tuesday musical.

What conversation on the delicate subject took place between Miss Wilson and the Child has nothing to do with this story.

It is to be supposed that Miss Torrington knew her own mind on the question of Penfield Wilkins; at any rate, she kept her own counsel and, as far as possible, her head.

"You understand perfectly, Penfield," said she, luminously, one day in the Park; "this is a game we are playing—a nice game, a Spring game. No, don't answer me in epigram," she continued, as Wilkins essayed to speak; "I hate epigrams, except my own."

Penfield sat silent for several minutes, poking the dirt with his stick. "Games result in large scores some-

times, Elizabeth—old scores to be paid off, or new scores to stand white and accusing on the blackboard."

"My dear, you are far too young to talk of old scores; as for new ones, *pouf!* the next girl discreetly wipes them out. I trim my vestal lamp for discretion in other people."

He nearly lost his temper for a moment.

"You annoy me when you call me young in that tone. I'm not young."

Elizabeth laughed, delightedly. "You are, you are, you prove it. Every one says you are; you look it, you act it. You're even called 'the Child'."

Wilkins emitted a soft, sibilant oath between his teeth. "Can you never take me seriously? I am not so young."

"Seriously? What are you, seriously, Penfield?"

No man can tell a woman what he is, seriously. On self-analysis, neither an angel nor a devil can live up to a reputation.

Penfield Wilkins hesitated and was tritely lost.

In many ways the Spring was delightful. Apart from such inconsequent dialogues as the foregoing, the two had an unaffectedly gay companionship. Indeed, Miss Wilson left for Tuxedo in a rage at both of them.

As the Summer days began to approach, the town was bereft of society and empty houses stood in somnolent rows, quite content in shuttered respectability. But Elizabeth Torrington stayed on. Wilkins was seen with her constantly.

"It's a perfect shame," wrote Mrs. Whitestone—who had stayed in town to secure a divorce, with alimony, from Whitestone—to Lucy Wilson. Since she did not specify wherein lay the particular shamelessness, Miss Wilson drew her own benevolent conclusions and invited the Child to come to Newport with her in August.

One hot evening in June, Penfield Wilkins took Miss Torrington for a

ride through the Park in a hansom. It was a favorite pastime of theirs.

"I go to the shore to-morrow," said she, suddenly.

"Yes, Elizabeth." Wilkins answered slowly, with the careful, even tone of a man holding an emotion in leash. "Yes, Elizabeth." He looked out absently at black, shapeless masses of foliage, through which an impalpable mist quivered about the electric lights. It seemed to him like a picture of his mind. "Yes, Elizabeth," he said, a third time.

His tongue seemed disconnected from his brain and wagged on foolishly. His brain was too busy to stop it.

The light fell on his face as the cab passed a lamp.

"Why, Penfield, you look almost old." Elizabeth laughed, a little nervously.

"Listen, Penfield," she continued, hastily, "it's been awfully dear of you thus to play with me for so long. We've flirted outrageously; every one has talked about us. But—but you see I've been so perfectly sure of you all the time. You're such an awfully nice boy; so good-natured, so funny, and so—so—so—"

"Young, Elizabeth."

"Yes, so nice—and young. I knew you weren't—well, serious—and I trusted you. You see, you're the kind of man a girl feels like trusting—you don't do horrid things. And I've seen that you liked me in just the jolly, happy way I like you. Did you speak?"

"No, Elizabeth."

"And—and—well, I knew you understood. You did understand, didn't you, Penfield? Didn't you?" There was a sharp, almost frightened note in her voice.

Penfield Wilkins hesitated. His brain was beating against the sides of his head one moment and then slipping numbly down long, gray spaces the next. How foolishly those moths beat against that electric light, he thought. This was Elizabeth with him in the cab, of course; he was Penfield Wilkins. He understood that.

"*Didn't you?*"

His tongue took up its monotonous wagging. "Yes, Elizabeth."

"I knew it. Oh, for a minute I was almost afraid you—you—might have cared—cared, really! I'm a little nervous to-night, I think. But you didn't; I'd hate to have you think that I am a heartless thing—a—a—horrid flirt. You see, I am so sure of you, Penfield. Penfield?"

"Yes."

"I want to tell you something."

"Yes, Elizabeth." Would that tongue never stop!

"I'm—I'm engaged to be married—I'm engaged." She bestowed an im providently happy smile upon darkness. Then she turned, pouting.

"You don't ask who it is. Don't you care, at all?"

Wilkins's strong walking-stick broke in his hand. He did not notice it, until the pieces fell.

"Elizabeth, Elizabeth! I—I—Elizabeth, can't you see, I—" His voice quivered with more than the enthusiasm of youth. "I—" He stopped short.

The hansom jolted along amiably; the driver swore a cordial greeting to a passing fellow. In that brief moment much of importance passed through Penfield Wilkins's mind. The character of it may be interpreted as you choose.

"Elizabeth Grant Torrington," he began again, "I congratulate you, honestly." The tone was delightfully gay and debonair. "Who is the fortunate fellow?"

"Dear Penfield!" She laid her hand affectionately on his. "You're a dear boy, and he's John Holland. You've heard of him. He's in London now."

"You are a delightful girl, Elizabeth, and Holland, I'm sure, believes himself unworthy of you. Were there

another in the world like you, Elizabeth, I should reconsider my recent vow of celibacy. Let's pass on lightly to our next subject."

A little chill wind crept against them. It depressed her unreasonably.

"Elizabeth, if you don't mind, I'd like to go back. I've a ripping headache." Penfield Wilkins sighed—it seemed a very weary sigh.

The ride home was almost a silent one. Silence is not often the golden thing the proverb declares it.

"I wish you'd not see so much of Lucy Wilson next season," Miss Torrington burst out, as they neared home. "People laugh at you and talk, Penfield—talk dreadfully."

"Very well, I'll be a good—boy, my dear friend."

The cab clattered up to Miss Torrington's door.

"Good night, Penfield, and *au revoir*. I'll see you in the Autumn again. And, Penfield—you're a *dear!*!"

"Elizabeth Grant Torrington, I—bid you *au revoir*. You and I have played a nice game; there are no scores to pay—for you. Good night."

Elizabeth lingered on the steps, half embarrassed. "How tired and old you look, Penfield!"

"Nonsense, Elizabeth, it's my crabbed youth without make-up that you behold."

She turned impatiently. "Oh, do try to seem as old as you ought to be, Penfield! Good night."

"Where to, sir?" asked the cabby. "Feeling sick, sir?" as Penfield Wilkins leaned somewhat weakly against the wheel.

A touch of the old smile flickered on Wilkins's face. "Sick? No; only the well dare to admit they are sick, cabby. Drive me to the Fountain of Youth."



REASON is a flower seldom found growing in the Garden of Love.

PERNICIOUS PRIDE

THREE once was a Seal who couldn't conceal
 A churlish, invidious pride
 In the fit of his coat, and he'd constantly gloat
 O'er his fellows who swam in the tide.

But his pride had a fall when, one day, a Narwhal
 Observed: "You've no collars or cuffs!"
 The Seal made retort, with a vigorous snort:
 "Young feller, don't give me no bluffs."

Then he walked down the shore for an hour or more
 Until he came up with a Man,
 To whom he remarked—or, more properly, barked—
 "Will you give me some cuffs if you can?"

The Man said he could, aye, in fact, that he would,
 And sidled up close to the Seal.
 "I'll give you a cuff that will prove quite enough—
 A cuff which I think you will feel."

Without more ado, near the Seal the Man drew
 And dealt him a vigorous cuff
 With a hard, knotted club. And the skin of that cub
 Is now being worn as a muff!

ALBERT LEE.



THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING IS IN NOT EATING

"**Y**OU can hardly persuade Miss Oldgirl that marriage is not a failure."
 "Why? She never did marry."
 "But she tried to and failed!"



NOT NOVEL

HE—Do you read fiction during the Summer?
SHE—No; I listen to it.



AFRESH fallacy is often more pleasing than a twice-told truth.

NEWPORT, THE APOSTLE OF ESTHETICISM

By Douglas Story

THE American is emphatically a gregarious animal. He dreads a desert, detests solitude, abhors the wilderness. If he would be literary, he congregates with others in a Brook Farm; if he would be religious, he finds a Salt Lake City; if he would be industrious, he uprears a sky-scraping Chicago. Most significantly of all, if he would be recuperated, he withdraws to a Newport.

This national love of a crowd argues no phenomenal sociability of the American people. England, dappled with country houses; France, with its widely scattered châteaux; Germany, with its schlosses and hunting lodges; each in its own way is as hospitable as the United States. It is not so much the desire for intercourse with their fellows that influences the Americans in their aggregation. It is the need of others constantly within hail—the sentiment in an adult generation that makes the timorous child shriek aloud in the darkness. A nervous nation, they cannot bear to be alone.

And so it comes that they have builded themselves by the ocean a retreat that has not its like in the world. They have raised themselves a city of palaces, and have called it a village of cottages, striving thereby to give a rustic veneer to a society that is esthetic as anything in the cities. They have taken the bluff summits of cliffs, have rolled them, and turfed them, and laid trim lawns upon them. They have seized upon a wind-swept plateau, and have planted there a garden of the tropics. They have transmogrified rough country roads into smooth driving paths and leafy

avenues. They have chosen a village of fishermen and farmers, and have made of it a Newport, a Mecca of fashion, a hermitage for millionaires, a wonderful *urbs in rure*. They have fetched thither the art of every age, of every clime, to embellish a strip of New England seaboard. And the effect is a kaleidoscope of styles that first shocks, then interests, finally entralls the alien beholder.

Jerkily over the cobblestones of the village, smoothly up the other side, one drives from the railway station to Bellevue avenue and the mansions of Newport. On either side, and over through the screenery of trees, are sprinkled the residences—great villas of marble and stucco and brick, set in their patches of shrubbery and grassy lawn.

Nowhere in America is there such green and luscious turf as here in Newport. Were it widespread, as in the parks of England and France, one would be relieved from the sensation of crowding that oppresses the foreigner; but where should be stretched a generous carpet is but a niggardly border, an art-square of lawn in front of the houses. The effect is to make of a concourse of country houses a mere suburb, a cluster of mansions robbed of their proper perspective. Houses that demand a sweep of a mile before them are cramped within a fifty-yard edging of garden. Vast palaces stare stonily through at one from the other side of the fences, denied their due dignity of aspect by reason of their propinquity. Gateways that should frame long vistas give upon a few yards of graveled

carriageway, ridiculing their massiveness.

Yet is Newport a marvelously beautiful spot, a place to command the respect of the blasé sojourner from Aix or Baden or Cairo. Here are no public hostelries—the curse and the canker of European watering-places. To visit Newport one must be of Newport, a guest or a cottager. There is no opportunity for the impertinences of tourists, for the social salmagundi of Homburg and Ostende. In the midst of a democracy is here a more rigid class-exclusiveness than anywhere in monarchical Europe. The American aristocracy has hedged itself about with a formality as impenetrable as any patent of an Old World nobility. It has sought a retreat for itself, and has made millions the price of entry. No chance comer can buy a week's or a night's admission as he can at Monte Carlo or Brighton. He must become a cottager, the head of an establishment. And so is Newport more absolutely American than Deauville is French or Venice Italian. It is built up out of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore and, most recently, of the fashionable quarter of Pittsburg. Aliens are as rare as dromedaries on the streets of Newport.

Perched on the highlands above the Atlantic, Newport looks out over a bulwark of toy cliffs across a sea as blue as the Mediterranean, to the heat haze on the horizon or the green of the opposing shore of Middletown. It is clean and caller and spray-sprinkled, with the smell of the seaweed in its nostrils and the briny healthfulness of the ocean all about. The lawns of the shoreward cottages stretch to the break of the cliffs and in cozy little coves beneath are the bathing places of the cottagers. In a bigger bight is the place reserved for the bathing of the Four Hundred—so the vulgarians of the village phrase it—a section of God's own coast made over to the exclusive use of the millionaires. Along the lip of the bluff is the cliff walk—a promenade for the cottagers,

the perambulating place of the nursemaids.

It is all very healthy and sanitary if not strictly Arcadian, with a sort of refined rusticism that tans one's skin under costumes from Worth and Paquin, a kid-gloved pastoralism that retains the respect of the proletariat while benefiting the health of the cottage community. The landscape is rather of Watteau than of Millet, delicately outlined, daintily tinted; but lacking something of the virility of English country life, something of the simplicity of the German, something of the grace of the French. It is American, of the America of Fifth avenue and the Metropolitan Opera House.

But there is another Newport—the Newport of the Ocean Drive, of long automobile rides, of the tennis court and the polo ground. It is in this Newport that the millionaires of the second and third generation gain the manliness that is needed to combat the snobbery inseparable from the exclusiveness of the Newport of cottages. On the polo ground and on the golf-links Young America is maintaining the chivalry, the manly vigor, the self-reliance, that ever have been associated with an Anglo-Saxon aristocracy. Here, in Newport, sport approximates more nearly to the English standard than elsewhere in the United States. It is not so much athletics as exercise that is cultivated; not so much a fierce struggle of warring interests that is indulged in, as a friendly contest between men and women who play the game for the game's sake. Newport as a standard of athletic morals should become a strenuous missionary throughout the States. The gospel of sport has been sadly misread in many of the universities and athletic clubs of America.

Down there in the harbor ride the yachts of the cottagers, a priceless fleet of pleasure vessels. There young America lunches, and dines, and breathes in the ozone of the Atlantic. It is true, costumes are more elaborate than at Kiel or at Cowes, but on

board as elsewhere the democratic aristocracy must still carry its patent of nobility visibly about with it. It is true, the yachts' furnishings, the service, the flowers and the menu are more elaborate than elsewhere has been thought necessary for a sea-going outfit; but where there is money in millions, there is no adequate reason why it should not be expended on the best the world can supply.

It is not fair to judge the yachts of Newport by the standards of the Solent. Millions are here in place of thousands, and plate were of little more moment to a Newport cottager than delf to a Channel yachtsman. Nor is there much ostentation of wealth on the yachts of American millionaires. Nowhere has the taste of the designer been more apparent than in the equipment of American pleasure vessels. Money has not been spared, because money did not need to be spared; but it is only when the odium of comparison is introduced that one recognizes the outlay on boats that never yet sailed a day's distance out of sight of land. It is on these yachts that the society women of America gain the strength to carry them through the seasons—in town, in London, and on the Riviera—that constitute their year's work. Here, their complexions are involuntarily renovated, their ankles strengthened, their moral force invigorated. So that the American women of the élite are better mothers than the women of France or of the Continent.

The cottages of Newport afford a strange commentary upon the contrasting tastes of the American nation. Their heterogeneity were impossible in a race of settled culture, in a race of common blood, in a country of limited extent. But the United States is a nation of nations. Its people are not Americans, but Englishmen and Scotsmen, Frenchmen and Germans, Italians and Spaniards of the third or fourth or tenth generation. Their taste in architecture is a

taste that was born on the sunny Mediterranean shore, in cozy Normandy orchards, in classic Spain and Italy, in baronial Scotland and England. It is revealed in the châteaux, the castles, the villas, the loggias of Newport. Seville and Welbeck, Florence and Falaise, here stand side by side on the same strip of grass, separated only by a grille from Venice or Antwerp.

To the alien observer this curious variety of styles at first argues a strange lack of settled opinion. But to the student of psychology it represents not so much a want of taste as a vast variety of tastes descended from remote European ancestors. It is not so much a manifestation of mimicry as it is the demonstration of hereditary predilections. In time these will coalesce into an American estheticism. But that time is not yet, and in the variety of Newport architectures lies the promise of an art that in the near future will be national, distinctive.

In the interior of the cottages fortunes are displayed in tapestries, carvings, pictures, hangings and bric-à-brac. Here the decorator has been interfered with by the globe-trotting propensities of the American. Carpets from Persia mix indiscriminately with tapestries from medieval bowers, with rugs from Cashmere, with embroidered kakemonos from Peking and Tokio, to yield a palette of color that would delight a Turner, but is a shock to the man of taste and culture. In the more recent houses these freaks of fancy, these accumulations of discordant arts, have given room to a studied simplicity. Cool halls, marble floors sprayed with fountains, green with ferns and illumined with soft light, have given to the best ordered of the Newport cottages the austerity of a Roman villa. Newport is rapidly developing out of the complex into the simple, and with it the whole of the American nation.

The life of Newport is clean, is healthy, is elevating, as is that of none of the European watering-places. It

has fulfilled its purpose as a retreat for the multi-millionaire, has respected his prejudices, has provided his comforts, has cultivated his taste. For the younger generation it has furnished a watering-place free from the demi-mondaine of Europe, immune from the intrusion of the tripper—a place where he can mix with the people

of his own class, can lay the foundations of that cultured caste without which no nation is complete. Already Newport has justified her existence. To-morrow she will be an apostle preaching the gospel of health, of sport, of self-respect, of all those qualities which go to the making of a true aristocracy.



PAN

ROISTERERS, vagabonds forever free,
Mendicants, blacksheep, outcasts—what you please—
We singers of the careless melodies,
Great Pan, we make our only prayer to thee.
To thee alone our only hymn shall be,
Save these we sing thine earth and sky, and these
We sing thy nymphs beneath the forest trees,
Till all their pulses thrill in harmony.

Wanderers all, to thee we wander far
And pledge our songs subservient to thy nod;
Finding thy gross, distorted features fair
Because thou only, knowing what we are,
Beneath the brute canst see the hidden god,
Behind the sneer canst read the great despair.

REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN.



THE KEY OF THE SITUATION

HUSBAND—Darling, I'm too tired to go to that dance to-night. Do you mind going alone?

WIFE—Why, no. But when I get home where shall I leave the latchkey?



AND HE WAS CRUSTY

FIRST ANT—How was the picnic?

Second Ant—Never saw such a crush in my life! Some one sat down on the pie.

AN UNDISTINGUISHED MAN

By Charles W. Westron

SO far as I could see—and I had given the matter some attention—there was only one objection to our being married at once. It was, perhaps, a trifle awkward that the obstacle should happen to be Ulrica herself, for Ulrica was of the essence of the contract. I recognized that, fully, and the occasion was not a particularly favorable one either, yet——

“Tea,” I suggested.

“Thanks,” said Ulrica, lazily, sinking into a garden-chair with a sigh of relief.

“Bit bored?” I asked.

“A bit,” she admitted, handing me her cup, while she withdrew from her hair two long, wicked-looking pins, which fastened her straw hat. “Garden-parties are rather trying.”

“That’s not a bad backhanded stroke of yours across the court, all the same,” I said, in my best patronizing manner, vigorously fanning her the while with the discarded hat.

“Let’s move into the shade,” she suggested.

I thought this rather unkind of Ulrica, for the sun had been doing its level best—not unsuccessfully—to discover unsuspected tints in her dark hair. I said as much.

“Tennis, too, is rather trying,” she murmured.

“And golf?”

“And golf and ping-pong and dancing and indoor meetings and outdoor greetings and——”

“Cycling,” I suggested. She had forgotten cycling.

“A nuisance!” said Ulrica, with decision. “It’s the worst of the

lot; besides, my bicycle is geared only to sixty-eight. That’s not high enough.”

“Is the new curate?” I asked. The new curate is a man of ritual.

“I don’t understand,” said Ulrica, who did understand. She admires the new curate.

“He is geared up pretty high,” I had to explain. I felt aggrieved. Ulrica has no right to admire the new curate, and explanations are horrible things.

“Don’t make fun of sacred matters,” she said, with admirable sternness.

“I very rarely make fun of you,” I protested.

I strolled to an enterprising ball, which had rolled in our direction, and impressively pushed it with my toe a few inches nearer the man who wanted it. I felt confirmed in my opinion. The occasion was not a favorable one. When I returned, Ulrica had shifted her chair within the shadow of an acacia and was reclining with closed eyes.

I proceeded to look penitent. She understands that when I look at my boots I mean to look penitent.

Ulrica opened her eyes. “Every girl here is wearing a white frock,” she said, in a mournful voice, as one who spoke a solemn truth. Then, overcome by the comprehensiveness of her woe, she closed her eyes once more—the lashes are inclined to be long—and petulantly dug her head into the bulge of the canvas chair.

I looked at her, approvingly. As I looked, it occurred to me that she, too, was wearing a white frock. “You

are wearing a white frock," I ventured to remark.

"That's different."

"Entirely different." To do her justice, it did seem different. "Your costumes," said I, "are as elusive as they are complete, as complete as they are charming, as charming—"

"Everything is so ordinary," interrupted Ulrica, pointing a copper-colored tennis shoe and gazing at it with strong disapproval. "The garden, the house, the people—all of them eating strawberries—"

"You are eating strawberries," I murmured, in parenthesis.

"—as if they had never eaten strawberries before," she concluded, ignoring the murmur.

"The garden and the house seem fairly abstemious," I remonstrated, "and some of the people appear to be eating minute particles of cake."

"I think I shall walk down to the bridge," said Ulrica, forbiddingly.

But, as it chanced, I, too, thought I would walk down to the bridge.

The path to the bridge is rather a pretty path. It runs through a little wood, which possesses all the proper accessories to a little wood. There is shade and there are flowers—fox-gloves, woodbine and dog-roses—and there are ferns and there are other things. But the chief glory of the wood is the stream, and spanning the stream is the bridge itself, small, yet serviceable, with ornamental trellis-work at the sides for the pleasing of artistic sensibilities.

All this I pointed out to Ulrica.

"From the giddy height of four feet," I said, by way of peroration, "we can gaze into the fast-flowing torrent and think great thoughts."

"And talk great nonsense."

"To indulge in abuse is not a mark of distinction," I said, reprovingly.

"I don't pretend to be distinguished. I'm only a little girl," she replied, with irritating demureness. "It is you—you, who should distinguish yourself."

I thought I saw an opening. "To be associated with you," I said, im-

pressively, "will be distinction enough for me."

Ulrica has a knack of varying her attitude conversely with my expectations. On this occasion I was prepared for her to say many things. She said nothing. That, of itself, perhaps, was not unpropitious; but she laughed—that was. I abandoned the opening.

"One might write a book," I said, after a long pause, during which I hurriedly reviewed my resources.

Ulrica did not seem impressed. "A great and good book," I hastened to add, reassuringly.

"And dedicate it to me?"

"Naturally I should dedicate it to you."

"You might write one of those letter-things," said Ulrica, suddenly fired with enthusiasm. "You know the kind of thing—they look awfully nice. Having regard to the fact that all the best and most beautiful thoughts in the book have sprung from me, to whom, but me, should you dedicate it?"

"To whom, indeed?"

"It puts the whole thing in a nutshell," she said, delightedly.

We walked upon the bridge and stood looking into the water.

"How would you like something short in big print?" I asked. "'To the sharer of my labors,' for instance?"

On her forehead Ulrica keeps some curls—not ringlets, be it understood, but little waves of fluffiness. On this occasion they shook—decisively.

"Or, 'To my wife!'"

They stopped shaking. "After all, you haven't written the book," she said, quickly. "There's a trout."

There was not the least doubt about it. It was a trout.

"A pound, if he's an ounce," I said, gravely.

"But I'm afraid I can't really respect you, Joe!" said Ulrica.

Now we were at that time partly sitting on, partly leaning against, the flimsy side-rail of the bridge, and Ulrica was looking particularly charm-

ing. It was, probably, the combination of circumstances that inspired me.

"I've hit it!" I cried, joyfully.

Ulrica looked—not unnaturally—for the trout.

"I'm going to distinguish myself," I explained.

"How?" asked Ulrica, doubtfully.

"Going to fall into the stream," I said, with an idiotic grin. The idiotic grin was a feature of the inspiration, but Ulrica did not know that.

"Don't be absurd," she said, in disgust.

"To be absurd is to be distinguished," I argued, plaintively.

A mischievous gleam visited Ulrica's eyes and a smile lurked in her dimples. To make me look foolish is an exercise that has always had a considerable fascination for her. It was on that recollection that the inspiration was based.

"You daren't do it," she said.

"On the contrary, I should like to do it."

"Then do it!" she cried.

I slipped my arm through hers.

"To be with you," I said, "would be delightful under any circumstances."

"Don't be silly," said Ulrica, rather weakly.

"Under any circumstances," I repeated, solemnly. Then I leaned well back and, intertwining my legs with a convenient rail, delivered my ultimatum.

"Either we are going to distinguish ourselves, together and immediately, or—" I paused.

"Or what?" gasped Ulrica, nervously, trying to free her arm.

"—or you are going to promise to marry, within three months, an undistinguished man," I repeated, slowly and distinctly.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," said Ulrica, indignantly. "It's abominable!"

I threw my weight back, and the rails creaked ominously. "Only a few rusty nails between you and fame," I said.

Ulrica temporized. While she was temporizing, one of the rusty nails gave way.

"Three months," I said, firmly.

Ulrica blushed. While she was blushing, another rusty nail gave way.

"Three months."

"Twelve," whispered Ulrica.

"Three."

The rail started six inches, and it was only by an effort that I recovered my balance.

"Six," she murmured, offering a composition of ten shillings in the pound.

"Of your own free will?" I asked. It was, perhaps, not altogether an unnecessary thing to ask.

"Of—my—own—free—will."

It appears that, just as I was accepting the composition, the new curate saw us, so we acquired some slight fame, after all.



THE RAINBOW

"WHY all these smiles?" I queried,
As she stepped within the hall;
"One would judge the drenching downpour
Didn't trouble you at all."

She tossed her head and answered,
In a very saucy tone,
"Why should it, when the downpour
Brought a rain-beau all my own!"

CORA GASKILL ALBERGER.

A MIDSUMMER MEDLEY

THE bumble-bee is haunting
 The wild rose far and nigh;
 The bullock's blithely flaunting
 His tail to hit the fly.

The cricket's wildly fifing
 Within the crammed chink;
 The Ethiop is knifing
 The melon green and pink.

The horsefly skims the milkweed
 Beside the old stone wall;
 The spider climbs the silkweed
 Beneath the buttonball.

The ironweed its pristine
 Cascade of color throws
 Along the amethystine
 Haze-billow as it flows.

In dreams I tap my knob white
 While perching on a rail,
 And listen to the Bob White—
 In other words, the quail;

Yet wot not of the bird's worth
 Within its toasted sphere,
 But read my ten-cent Wordsworth,
 Until with joy I hear

A mad and glad bell ringing,
 Which brings me off the fence
 And sends me hashward winging
 With revelry intense.

And then smiles lovely Phyllis,
 Until I'm skyward borne,
 While fluting Amaryllis
 Upon an ear of corn.

R. K. MUNKITTRICK.



AMENITIES

“WHAT a pretty suit, my dear! It fits you as if it had been made for you.”

THE LOGIC OF CIRCUMSTANCES

By James Hazleton Willard

ONE bright March morning, while on my way to our law-offices, it chanced that I met my junior partner, Mr. Howard Freeman, on the elevated train. We fell to discussing the evidently contented expression on the faces of most of our fellow passengers, chiefly business men of the down-town district. The conversation continued after we had left the train and proceeded toward Broadway.

"It is difficult to say who are truly happy," I observed; "it is rarely that I have seen one who could be pronounced perfectly happy."

"I know a man," remarked Howard, "who is, probably, the happiest person in New York."

"A friend of yours?"

"Yes, one whom you know; my college classmate, Dr. Homer Manson. He has a fair practice as a physician and surgeon. A monograph on pyæmia has made him famous in his profession. His aunt, Miss Sappho Manson, last month made him residuary legatee under her will, by which he will inherit over half a million dollars. He is engaged to be married to Miss Lilian Arnold, one of the prettiest and wealthiest girls in the city, and, all in all, one may well deem the doctor the happiest man in—"

"Extra! Extra! All about the murder in Madison avenue. Arrest of the murderer!"

A newsboy was loudly crying his papers and selling them rapidly.

Howard purchased a paper and glanced at the head-lines.

"Oh, judge!" he cried, in tones which revealed his distress, "this

seems hardly possible. Dr. Homer Manson has murdered his aunt and is now in custody."

The New York Daily has a reputation for stating all the facts of any case clearly. Its account of the murder was fairly accurate. Howard read it to me as we stood a little apart on the sidewalk, out of the crowd. Following the sensational head-lines came this account:

"Miss Sappho Manson, an estimable and wealthy middle-aged lady, was murdered last night about nine o'clock, in the reception-room of her elegant residence on Madison avenue, near Twenty-ninth street. Her favorite nephew, the distinguished young physician, Dr. Homer Manson, called on her at about eight o'clock and was shown by the butler, John Meade, into the reception-room on the opposite side of the hall from the parlor. The latter room is usually unlighted in the evening unless some social function is in progress. Miss Manson's companion, or secretary, as she preferred to call her, Miss Lily Reath, was in the library immediately in the rear of the reception-room and heard part of the conversation between the aunt and nephew. With the exception of a quarrel regarding a lady, this conversation was carried on in ordinary tones for nearly an hour, at which time Miss Reath thought farewell greetings were exchanged. But, suddenly, the conversation became louder, the voice of Miss Manson being raised in tones of reproach. The subject under discussion was a will that Miss Manson had recently executed. This will left nearly all her property to this nephew. The secretary had never known her mistress to be so excited on any previous occasion. The clock struck nine while this conversation was going on. At last, Miss Manson cried out, 'I will not do it. I will never do it!' Then there was a noise that indicated a struggle, and a stifled cry; then all was silent.

"Miss Reath, not desiring to interfere in any family quarrel, waited a few moments

for further developments and then went into the hall, just in time to see the front door closing upon a man who slammed it violently. This man was of medium height, well dressed and wearing a light Spring overcoat and a derby hat. Miss Reath could not positively identify this person, as she did not see his face, but she believes he was Dr. Homer Manson, as the figure was of about his size, and the overcoat and hat were similar to those worn by the doctor.

"The door between the hall and the reception-room was open. Miss Reath went toward it and, looking into the room, saw the body of her mistress lying on the floor. She made an outcry, and the servants, four in number, quickly assembled. Miss Manson's skull was fractured by a blow on the right side of the head, and blood was flowing over the carpet from a wound in the left side, and still remaining in this wound was a white-handled scalpel which had pierced the lady's heart. This scalpel, which was broken in the middle, was afterward identified as belonging to Dr. Manson. In the murdered lady's right hand was a silk scarf, a little soiled and of a peculiar pattern, which was also recognized as belonging to the doctor. On the floor was found a large button which was of the same pattern as those on the doctor's overcoat.

"Meade was despatched to the police station in West Thirtieth street, but it was some time before the police reached the house. The indications as to the criminal were so clear as to leave no doubt in their minds concerning the perpetrator of the crime. Police Sergeant McIntire and Patrolman Murphy went to the doctor's rooms, but he was not there. A young man who attended the office, James Carroll, said the doctor had returned shortly before, but had almost immediately left for his club. The sergeant went to the Culture Club, but found that the doctor had remained there only a few minutes. The club and the rooms were both watched, and at half-past two o'clock this morning Dr. Manson was arrested as he was about to enter his rooms. He was wearing a derby hat, and a button was missing from his light Spring overcoat. He was unable to account for the missing button and claimed not to have observed its loss previously.

"Asked if he had a white-handled scalpel, he answered in the affirmative and opened a small case of instruments that he took from his overcoat pocket, but failed to find the scalpel.

"He professed great grief at the murder of his aunt, but solemnly asserted his innocence of the crime. He refused, however, to make any statement except under advice of counsel, and the sergeant judged that his manner was that of a guilty man who had started to flee, after the commission of the

crime, and then returned to face the consequences.

"The police are to be greatly commended for the rapidity and secrecy with which the arrest was made. None of the newspapers had any knowledge of the crime before they went to press. The high standing of Dr. Manson in his profession and the prominence of the murdered lady promise to make this case one of the most sensational of recent years."

"Howard, my dear boy, I am sorry for you," I said, as my partner ceased reading.

"Sorry! What do you mean, judge?" Howard asked, with a puzzled look.

"Can you not see, if this account is really a statement of facts, there is no escape for your friend? He will most certainly sit in the electric chair."

"You say that because you do not know him," rejoined Howard. "While he is cold, even stern in his manner, and unpopular, he could never have committed such a crime. He can certainly explain matters satisfactorily. This account is probably a tissue of falsehoods woven by the police to prejudice the public mind."

We proceeded to our offices and found Mr. Virgil Manson, a cousin of the doctor's, pacing the floor of Mr. Miller's room—the latter gentleman had not yet reached his office. Mr. Manson had come to our offices, at his cousin's urgent request, for the purpose of employing our firm, and stated that Dr. Manson was especially anxious to see Mr. Miller and Mr. Freeman.

It appeared, from Mr. Virgil Manson's conversation, that the newspaper account was substantially correct, and he professed himself unable to throw any light on the matter. He expressed his belief in his cousin's innocence; one reason for this being that he had met the doctor at the Culture Club at about half-past nine o'clock the previous evening, and his manner had been perfectly natural, although he had seemed a little overheated from fast walking. Mr. Virgil Manson bewailed the disgrace that would attach to the family on account of the murder.

When Mr. Miller arrived the facts were briefly stated to him, and he accompanied Mr. Manson and Mr. Freeman to the police station.

The Manson family had been clients of the firm of Hazleton & Parsons for many years. Michael Manson, the founder of the family, had emigrated from England toward the close of the last century and had made a fortune as a fur-dealer. He left one son, Thomas Manson, who had increased the family property by slow accumulations and the purchase of real estate. This gentleman imagined himself to be a poet and had written what he termed an epic. He had left three sons and one daughter, the murdered woman, Miss Sappho Manson. These sons were all dead, but each had left one son, bearing, in each case, the father's name. These cousins, Homer, Virgil and Milton Manson, were all unmarried. Dr. Homer Manson, the successful physician, was of medium height, clean-shaven, with light-gray eyes, a high forehead and dark hair. His appearance was that of a reserved, cold, self-reliant and studious man. It was claimed, in the days when he attended the medical college, that he was the wildest boy in his class and especially callous, jesting grimly amid the mangled remains of the subjects in the dissecting-room and sometimes indulging in weird practical jokes. On one occasion he had scared a fellow-student almost out of his senses, by attaching a wire to the hand of a corpse so that it struck the student who was dissecting it. He had settled down, after graduation, but was said to be indifferent to the infliction of pain in his surgical operations. He was noted as a bacteriologist and vivisectionist, and it was asserted that he used no anesthetics when operating on animals.

Mr. Milton Manson was an undersized, insignificant-looking man. He had red hair and beard and, it might be said, red eyes as well, for they were constantly inflamed. He showed the effects of years of dissipation. He was a professional gambler and had

long since squandered the fortune left him by his father. He was now a hanger-on around gambling-hells and pool-rooms.

Mr. Virgil Manson was much the best looking of the three cousins and by far the most esteemed. He was of medium size, but alert and well formed. His eyes were black, as was also his hair, and he had one of those large, pale, clean-shaven, clear-cut faces which carry the impression of benevolence. He was unusually popular with women, and it was generally supposed that he would inherit the most of his aunt's wealth. He was reported to be fairly successful in his business as a promoter, but was one of those men who, while regarded as quite wealthy, are often pressed for money. I had assisted him several times in financial matters. He was outwardly a philanthropist, being a member of several charitable organizations and the life and soul of them all; but I had always believed that he used these organizations as a means of introduction to wealthy people, with a view of extending his business.

All the nephews had expected to inherit fortunes from their Aunt Sappho and had endeavored to humor her in her whims, which were many. Only a month before her death she had made her will, leaving a thousand dollars to Milton, five thousand to Virgil, and the rest of her estate—more than half a million dollars—to Homer. Mr. Miller had drawn her will, and the reasons she assigned for this disposition of her property were these: "Milton is a spendthrift and a gambler, Virgil is a hypocrite, using the cloak of charity to cover his questionable business methods, while Homer, although cold and cruel, is the only one who is any credit to the family." Mr. Miller suggested that such a disposition of her property might lead to a contest over the will, and asked her the sources of her information as to her nephews. Her answer was peculiar: "All the world knows what Milton is, and thinks it knows what Homer and Virgil are;

but I know what Homer is, and he knows what Virgil is." After this enigmatical sentence she proceeded to give further directions regarding her will. All the nephews, as well as the members of the aunt's household, had known of the provisions of the will, for no secret was made of the matter.

Before the party returned from the police station, Judge Egert had reached the office and we were discussing the case when the gentlemen entered.

Mr. Virgil Manson soon excused himself, on the plea that he must visit Miss Lilian Arnold, Dr. Manson's betrothed, and give her such encouragement as he could.

"You are acquainted with the lady, then?" I ventured.

"Oh, yes, we are old friends. At one time we were even more than that. She is a member of our District Relief Society, one of its most active members, too; a most estimable and charming girl. How deeply I feel for her in this awful situation!"

The statement of the case made by Mr. Miller to Judge Egert and myself was certainly far from reassuring. The doctor could not fix the time of his departure from his aunt's house nearer than between a quarter before and a quarter after nine, as he had not looked at his watch until, perhaps, an hour afterward. His call had been pleasant, except that his aunt had expressed marked disapproval of Miss Lilian Arnold, whom the doctor had defended warmly, and they had both become quite excited. There had been no discussion whatever regarding the will, such as Miss Reath had stated. The scarf was one the doctor had brought as a present to his aunt; it was his habit to bring her all his old scarfs to work into crazy-quilts. He knew nothing of the button missing from his overcoat, nor did he know how the broken scalpel came in the wound. He had worn a silk hat at the time of his call instead of a derby, but admitted that he had worn the derby during the earlier part of the

evening and also when he went to the club later; he could assign no reason for making this change of hats. It was generally known that they were careless at the Madison-avenue residence about putting on the catch-lock; in fact, he remembered that he himself had put on the catch when he left the house the previous evening. He also remembered that he had closed the door between the reception-room and the hall, as his aunt was going to read for a while. He denied having slammed the front door; he had left both the reception-room and the house almost noiselessly. He declined to state where he went from the club, as he did not wish to connect the names of innocent persons with the scandal of a murder case. He said that Miss Reath had expected to be well provided for in the will, but was left only one hundred dollars, the same amount having been left to John Meade, the butler. All of Miss Reath's statements regarding the conversation and the doors were false, and he, naturally, believed that she had some knowledge of, or connection with, the murder. All his aunt's nephews were accustomed to visit her occasionally. Although she was quite severe with Milton for his shiftless habits, yet, in her kindness of heart, she quite often advanced him money. She had invested in one of the schemes Virgil had promoted, losing money thereby, and declined thereafter even to examine any other investment proposed by him, but had taken an interest in his charitable associations, giving money freely to some of them. The chief bond between the doctor and herself seemed to be her family pride in his success, rather than any sincere affection for himself.

The doctor solemnly asserted his innocence, but was much cast down, seeming to be more exercised over the deadly blow dealt to his reputation by his arrest than over any danger to his life. In fact, he seemed dazed and puzzled at his peculiar position.

"To sum it all up," said I, "his story is that he did not commit the

crime, that he does not suspect any one, unless it be Miss Reath, and that he denies most of the evidence against himself, except that which is most incriminating—the clues, the scalpel, the scarf and the button. Is that a fair statement of the matter?"

"Yes, that states the case fairly," replied Mr. Miller. "I told the doctor his case was a dangerous one. He asked me to procure some hydrate of chloral to quiet his nerves, as he feared he could not sleep. His manner is that of a guilty man who is puzzled how to account for his actions. If his language were not so clear, one might almost suspect insanity."

"What is your opinion of the matter now, Howard?" I asked, turning to Mr. Freeman.

"You know how loath I was to believe him guilty when I read the account," answered Howard. "I knew him at college and always liked him, but I now recall that he was very quick-tempered. Miss Reath's story comports with this view of the matter. He may have killed his aunt in one of those violent rages for which he was noted."

"Well, gentlemen," said I, "the firm has taken the case, and we must do the best we can. There are a few details to examine, and I shall have Mr. Germaine take the matter up at once."

To my surprise, Judge Egert offered no suggestion, but seemed absorbed in deep thought as the informal conference broke up.

The next morning, both the cousins, Milton and Virgil, came to our office and urged us to do all in our power for their accused relative. The newspapers were unanimous in their view that this was the most fiendish and deliberate murder which had been committed in years, and they insisted that neither wealth nor position should avail to shield the murderer.

The grand jury would not meet for two weeks, and on my suggestion, to allay public excitement, Dr. Manson waived examination and was committed to the Tombs without bail, to await the action of the jury.

Mr. Germaine made an investigation that was thorough. He questioned all the servants in the house. The butler, John Meade, was far from communicative. He was evidently hostile to Dr. Manson, because the physician had urged his aunt to leave the butler nothing in her will. He thought that the doctor had worn a silk hat on the evening of the murder, but refused to state so positively. The butler had left the house about half-past eight and had returned shortly after nine. He had not heard the door slam, as Miss Reath had stated it did. He thought he would have heard it if the noise had been great, as it was his duty to attend the door. He asserted that Miss Manson was a very trying mistress, full of whims and very exacting with servants, in fact, with every one with whom she was associated. He had expected to receive at least a thousand dollars by her will, but was left only a paltry hundred. He refused to state where he was while he was away from the house that evening, but Mr. Germaine found that he had visited three saloons, and that he had stopped at one both while going for the police and while returning. The other servants in the house knew little of the events of the evening, until summoned by the cries of Miss Reath. None of them, however, had heard any slamming of the front door, as alluded to by the secretary.

The office-boy, James Carroll, thought the doctor had worn a derby hat all the afternoon and evening of that day. He did not recall his wearing a silk hat. He said the doctor was a disagreeable employer and forced him to do menial work, such as taking invitations around the city for Miss Manson's social entertainments. Carroll was a medical student, and felt himself superior to his station. He claimed that Miss Manson had always been ungrateful toward him, notwithstanding the services he rendered her. Yet, she was at times cajoling, and on one occasion, learning that he deemed it would require about a thousand dollars to enable him to begin the prac-

tice of medicine after graduation, she had told him that she was a benevolent woman, who liked to assist the worthy, and intimated very strongly that she might advance him that sum or leave it to him in her will. He had relied on this implied promise for a time, but had learned later that he was not even named in the will. Carroll manifested the utmost indifference as to both the murder and the fate of his former employer.

There was one thing that puzzled Mr. Germaine—the weapon which had crushed Miss Manson's skull. Miss Reath declared that there was nothing in the reception-room with which such a blow could have been inflicted. Mr. Germaine was of the opinion that such a blow could have been dealt by a heavy cane, if wielded by an athletic person. To sum it all up, Mr. Germaine ascertained nothing of any benefit to the accused, unless it was the butler's opinion regarding the silk hat, and this seemed to us too trivial to have much bearing on the case. All the partners were in the consultation-room when the report was made, but there was little said until I took the initiative.

"If we can bring him off with life-imprisonment, it will certainly be a victory for the firm. The real truth is that we never should have taken the case."

"Life-imprisonment!" exclaimed Mr. Miller. "You are optimistic, judge! This case is clear; the motive is plain. The doctor admits the disagreement regarding his sweetheart, and Miss Reath tells of the quarrel over the will. The old lady was doubtless going to change it. The opportunity to commit the crime was not unfavorable. The doctor could not have known of Miss Reath's presence in the library, or have foreseen the chances that left the tell-tale clues. Cruel character is such a well-known trait in murderers that I need hardly comment on it. The facts are plain and, in the main, admitted. They prove, not merely beyond a reasonable doubt, but beyond all pos-

sibility of doubt, that this man is incontestably——"

"Innocent," interrupted Judge Egert; "absolutely and incontestably innocent."

All of us looked at the old judge as if we doubted having heard him correctly. Mr. Miller was indignant and continued his remarks.

"No, not innocent, but guilty. The evidence incontrovertibly proves his guilt."

"The evidence, on the contrary, establishes his innocence beyond even an iota of doubt," maintained Judge Egert.

"You mean, judge," observed Mr. Freeman, "that you believe Miss Reath's story to be false and so infer that there is a conspiracy to fasten this crime on Dr. Manson?"

"I mean nothing of the kind," rejoined the old judge. "I don't know and I don't care whether this woman's story is true or false. A woman's mouth is not always a well-spring of truth, as every man who has cut his wisdom teeth knows. But consider all her statements to be true; with the admitted circumstances they prove, beyond the possibility of doubt, that, whoever committed this murder, it was not Dr. Homer Manson. It is a mathematical certainty, in fact; one of the most simple problems in the logic of circumstances."

"You have the proud distinction, judge, of being unique in your views," said Mr. Miller, who was plainly out of humor. "All the rest of the people in this city are evidently fools. Why don't you write a book on the relations of mathematics to murder and cite this case?"

I resolved to preserve peace, if possible, and endeavored to reconcile my partners.

"Judge Egert," I said, "I trust you are correct, both for the sake of Dr. Manson and for the sake of the firm. You will pardon us, however, if we cannot grasp your views unless you state them."

"I wish to ask Mr. Germaine a few questions before I make any state-

ment," said the old judge. "Is Dr. Manson left- or right-handed?"

"Right-handed. Why do you ask?"

"Because the crushing blow was on the right side of the head. Does he carry a cane?"

"No; when he goes out at night he prefers to take a revolver."

"How old is the office-boy and on what terms is he with the doctor?"

"He is about nineteen years old, but athletic," replied Mr. Germaine. "The doctor was about to discharge him for incompetency and inattention. I suspected it was his feeling against his employer which made him so positive that the doctor wore a derby hat that night. The boy is evidently of a sullen and revengeful nature."

"Was there any peculiar event, except this murder," resumed Judge Egert, "which took place in that part of the city about nine o'clock, the same night, so far as you have ascertained?"

"None that I have heard of," answered Mr. Germaine. "What peculiar event do you allude to?"

"I can't say, myself," returned Judge Egert, "but I think the one who had the wit to plan this murder so skilfully had also the wit to fabricate an alibi, which might be needed."

"Your questions are as mystifying as your view of the case, it appears to me," remarked Mr. Miller. "It would surprise me to have you give any possible reason for believing Dr. Manson innocent."

"It is no reason of my own," began Judge Egert; "it is the incontrovertible, remorseless logic of circumstances, clear as crystal, immutable as the laws of the universe. Let us consider this case in the light of the facts stated. Dr. Manson is a man of exceptional mental power, a trained physician, an able surgeon, one whose nerves are unshaken. He was residuary legatee under the will of his aunt and was known to have called on her that evening. Had he wished to kill her, he could have done so in many ways that would have

eluded detection—by disease germs, for example, for he was her physician, and could not only have prescribed for her, but have signed the death-certificate without exciting the slightest suspicion. Now, instead of that—and you will remark that for the present I admit that he had the motive, opportunity and character of a murderer—how does he kill her? He first crushes her skull with a blunt instrument which, shifted into his left hand, would have been most awkward; and then, to make it positively certain that any one must recognize him as the murderer, he takes a scalpel from his instrument-case and thrusts it into her heart, breaking it off in the wound. He also leaves a scarf, which he admits to be his, in the murdered woman's hand, and, as if that were not enough, he goes to the hall, tears a button off his overcoat and, returning to the reception-room, throws it on the floor. For fear that, with all these incontestable proofs of guilt, there may still be some doubt that he killed this woman, the doctor leaves the door of the reception-room open and then slams the front door—if we are to believe Miss Reath—the only possible purpose of which was to arouse the inmates of the house and call attention to the time of his departure. I don't see what more he could have done, unless it were to call in the servants and the secretary, and murder his aunt in their presence."

"Looked at from your point of view, it does not seem plausible that the murder could have been committed in this way," I observed.

"Plausible!" continued Judge Egert; "I tell you, it was simply impossible, unless the doctor is a lunatic with a monomania to commit suicide by sitting in the electric chair. In some respects logic resembles mathematics and the conclusions are as certain when the premises are established. For example, when you go into a room and remain there some time, you ordinarily leave no perceptible trace of your presence; it would be

exceptional if you left any article that could constitute a clue to your presence there. The existence of one clue, then, would be exceptional; but suppose there should be two clues, that would be still more extraordinary. It may be stated as a logical premise that the chances would not be one in a hundred that a careful man, not desiring so to do, would leave a single trace of his presence in a room; one to ten thousand that he would leave two; one to a million that he would leave three; or, to state it mathematically, the variation is that of the direct ratio of unity to the ultimate product of the number of clues, in geometrical progression, each clue being assumed to be of the constant value of one to a hundred. Now, here we have five distinct clues: the presence of the doctor, the scalpel, the scarf, the button and the slamming of the door; so, working out the problem mathematically, you can see that the chance that the doctor committed this murder, admitting he had the motive, opportunity and character of a murderer, is just one in ten billions. As the entire population of the globe is supposed to be less than a billion and a half, using the French and American system of numeration, it follows that the logic of circumstances proves beyond the possibility of a doubt, more than six times over, that of all the men, women and children in the world Dr. Manson could not have committed this murder. Do I make the proposition clear? Can you see the relation of mathematics to murder, Mr. Miller?"

"Yes, I can see your ingenious theory," responded the latter. "It is very pretty as a study in mathematics or logic, but the trouble is that it is subversive of all principles of evidence. It will be difficult to convince a judge and twelve level-headed jurors that the more proof you have of a man's guilt the greater is the probability of his innocence."

"Twelve level-headed idiots!" exclaimed Judge Egert. "The average juryman is about as competent to

weigh evidence as a pig is to dance a polka. Men gathered indiscriminately from the farm, the shop and the saloon are, under our judicial system, selected to pass on problems whose solution necessitates the highest degree of mental acumen. The only thing that saves the system from being an utter abomination is that trained thinkers, lawyers, can enlighten the jurors by their arguments. However, this case will never go to a jury."

"Never go to a jury?" I exclaimed, in surprise. "Do you, then, think the doctor will commit suicide?"

"Commit suicide? Of course not. But when this case is fully presented to the district attorney, he will never ask for the indictment of Dr. Manson; he will——"

"Go on, Judge Egert," interrupted Mr. Miller, testily. "Perhaps you will finally prove that Miss Manson murdered herself, jumping up and striking her head against the chandelier, then robbing Dr. Manson of his scalpel and plunging it into her own heart. Your theory is so simple, so plausible, so natural, and appeals so strongly to an ordinary man's common sense! Of course, with your eccentric views, you know who really did murder this unfortunate lady."

"I fear, Miller," returned Judge Egert, "you are a little chagrined because your analytical theory regarding crime has failed you on one occasion. I don't know who killed Miss Manson, but I can describe the person."

"Describe him!" I cried, in astonishment. "How can that be possible?"

"I did not say 'him'; I said 'person'. It certainly does not look like a woman's work; unless it be assumed that Miss Reath is in love with Dr. Manson and jealous of him—the world has discovered no limitations to a jealous woman's capabilities. But I said that I could describe the person; this is the description: some left-handed person having the opportunity to obtain the doctor's scalpel and to take a button from his overcoat; who hated Dr. Manson bitterly

enough to desire to see him sit in the electric chair, and who knew of his presence in the house that night; one, too, who knew that the front door was habitually unlocked; one so well known to Miss Manson as to provoke no outcry from that lady when the person entered the reception-room, and one strong enough to deal a crushing blow upon the victim's skull."

Then, turning to Mr. Germaine; the judge asked: "By the way, did the office-boy know of the door being unlocked and of the doctor's presence in the house?"

"Yes," answered Mr. Germaine, "all his intimate friends knew that Dr. Manson visited his aunt each Monday evening. The office-boy had frequently gone to the aunt's house, when the doctor was called on professionally, and entered there without ringing the bell."

"My belief is," continued Judge Egert, "that this murder was very suddenly planned; that it was committed either by some one in the house, or by one who entered it shortly before Dr. Manson left. The person could not have entered afterward, for you will remember the doctor put the latch on as he left; yet the crime was planned with great skill to throw the gravest suspicion on an innocent man."

"Yes," remarked Mr. Miller, drily, "gravest suspicion is a good phrase when a man is caught almost red-handed, and every intelligent man in the whole city, with one exception, believes him guilty."

"Now, I assume," continued Judge Egert, without noticing Mr. Miller's sarcasm, "that a person capable of planning such a murder would endeavor to establish an alibi, if possible. A well-established alibi is always the best proof of innocence. If there was an attempt to establish an alibi, it was probably done, as is usual, by calling particular attention to the time of some occurrence which was peculiar, as that is the sole means possible of fabricating an alibi with

certainty. A real alibi is usually a little uncertain as to time, but when an alibi is fabricated, special effort is always made to establish all the facts with certainty."

"And you are actually credulous enough," asked Mr. Miller, "to hope to discover such assumed action for the problematical fabrication of a supposititious alibi on the part of your hypothetical criminal, at a time which is undetermined?"

"I certainly hope so to do," replied Judge Egert. "If one wants anything in this world, he usually advertises for it. That is what I shall do in this case. It is not certain, but is worth trying. I must request that no hint of my views be given to any one. One thing more: much as I dislike to do so, I must call on Miss Lily Reath; I must see this woman. No report can tell what lurks in the thought-concealing eyes of a woman."

The next day Judge Egert and I called on Miss Reath at the Manson residence.

Miss Lily Reath was a peculiar woman. She was about twenty-eight years old, fair, yellow-haired, gray-eyed, tall, powerful and graceful, not beautiful, but of commanding presence and perfectly self-contained. Her face was refined, but she had the high cheek-bones characteristic of the American Indian, and her expression was stoical. Her manner was calm, and yet her cold gray eyes seemed to conceal passions which might be dangerous to one rash enough to offend her.

Her story did not vary from that which she had told the police immediately after the murder, and she told it simply, yet most positively, without comment. But two or three allusions to Dr. Manson soon revealed the fact that she was very bitter toward him, her only emotion being betrayed by a vengeful light coming into her eyes and her voice being slightly raised, when, in answer to Judge Egert's question if she had any warmer feeling than friendship for the doctor, she responded: "No, never. He would

have ruined me if he could, just as he defamed my character before the murderer and questioned my veracity after it. He is a cold-blooded libertine and a heartless villain."

She said that Miss Manson was a hard mistress and had been very unjust in leaving only one hundred dollars to her, who had borne her mistress's almost insufferable whims for many years, in fact, given the best years of her life to a distasteful service. Yet she said this calmly and without excitement. She seemed to have steeled her soul to hide any emotion beneath the mask of cold features. Judge Egert asked her if she could obtain for him any photographs of Dr. Manson and herself. She gave him a quick, penetrating glance, indicating distrust and unwillingness; then she went to an album, took out two photographs and handed them to him—with her left hand.

"I do not understand her at all," said Judge Egert, after we had left the house, "but that is not surprising. Since the day when Eve and the serpent took their little lunch in the garden, what man has ever understood a woman?"

"I notice one thing quite peculiar in this case," I remarked.

"What is that?"

"All who had any relations with Miss Manson speak of her as hard to satisfy, complaining or whimsical. She seems to have been a woman of great severity and to have been loved by none."

"What is there peculiar in that?" returned Judge Egert. "She was an old maid and simply attained the highest ideal in that character. Can you not see something still more peculiar in the case?"

"No; I fail to see anything remarkable," I answered.

"Everybody," observed Judge Egert, "except his own relations, seems to dislike Dr. Homer Manson. His aunt merely admired his intellect, Miss Reath and the butler detest him, and his office-boy regards him with deadly hatred. I can account for it

only by his cold, cruel nature. You know cruelty to animals is one of the marked characteristics of homicidal criminals."

The next Sunday the following advertisement appeared in all the leading newspapers:

PERSONAL.—The undersigned will pay one dollar for proof of any unusual or remarkable circumstance occurring between half-past eight and half-past nine o'clock last Monday evening, between Second and Sixth avenues and Twenty-third and Thirty-fourth streets in this city. The circumstance must have been noted as occurring within the time stated. If the information shall prove of value to the undersigned, a reward of one hundred dollars will be paid for it. State facts fully.

Z 219.

There were thirty-six answers received, several naming the murder as a peculiar circumstance, and they made a singular revelation of what takes place in a great city. I went over them with Judge Egert. In that hour these are some of the things that occurred: A Frenchwoman was hugged by a dancing bear in Second avenue; two gamblers held straight flushes against each other in Jim Ward's poker-room on Twenty-fourth street; a man was seen to kiss his wife three times in the course of fifteen minutes in a house on Twenty-ninth street.

"The writer of this note is probably a fantastic and picturesque prevaricator," remarked Judge Egert.

Hans Oberhaupt held sequences in succession in a pinochle game in Gus Meyer's saloon on Sixth avenue. On a bet, a man drank a quart of whiskey, at one draught, in another saloon on the same avenue.

There were other events described, almost equally unusual. Only two replies interested us. One stated that, a little after nine o'clock that evening, a tall woman was seen to run from Madison to Fifth avenue, on Twenty-ninth street. When she reached Fifth avenue the woman stopped and quickly retraced her steps.

The second letter was from the night-clerk of a drug-store on the corner of Sixth avenue and Twenty-seventh street. I quote the material part of it:

At ten minutes past nine o'clock I was waiting on a customer in the front part of the store when a man stepped very quickly into the side entrance. As soon as practicable, I went to him and asked what he wanted. "I have been waiting some time, and am in a hurry," he said. "I want some hydrate of chloral for an aching tooth."

As I was getting the drug, he broke a vase standing on the show-case. It was very clumsily, it seemed to me, purposely, done, and I compelled him to pay three dollars for it. He said he did not have time to wait and would rather pay than have any trouble, as he had an engagement to meet a man at nine o'clock. I remarked that it was already after nine. "You are wrong," he said, and showed me his watch, which indicated five minutes to nine. He was slightly out of breath, as if he had been walking quite fast or running. I do not know whether you will consider this unusual, but it seemed so to me. There was something peculiar in the man's manner and he was quite nervous. I hope you will send me the money, as I need it.

Respectfully yours,
JOHN A. MOORE.

Judge Egert proceeded to investigate the statements contained in these letters. On the second day thereafter he came to my office.

"Would it surprise you," he asked, "to learn that the lady who ran west on Twenty-ninth street, on the night of the murder, was Miss Lily Reath?"

"It certainly would."

"Nevertheless, she has confessed it to Mr. Germaine, after I was prepared to prove it, for her photograph was recognized by the man who wrote the letter regarding that fact. This impassive woman was not, however, disconcerted. She now claims that she followed the murderer to identify him positively, but, on reaching Fifth avenue, saw him turn down Broadway; so she returned to the house and gave the alarm. The investigation regarding the man mentioned by the drug-clerk will require more care. Do you think it possible, judge, that a man could have the subtlety to commit a murder and leave so many incriminating clues that their very number would induce the reasoning that he was not the criminal?"

"No," I replied, "the idea is too far-fetched. Besides, Dr. Manson has

broached no such theory; it is yours alone."

"At any rate," continued Judge Egert, "if the drug-clerk's story is true, the close of the case may be not only dramatic, but startling. He claims not to recognize the photograph of Dr. Manson. I am preparing for him another test which has occurred to me. I shall ask him to call on Dr. Manson at the Tombs to-morrow afternoon and then come here to meet Mr. Freeman and me, after our conference with the Manson cousins. I presume you have no objection to his sitting in the ante-room until this conference is over?"

"Certainly not," I responded, although I failed utterly to perceive the reason for his request.

Late the following afternoon I saw a young man, quite closely muffled, talking with the clerk in the ante-room; but I made no inquiries.

On Friday morning Judge Egert came again to my office.

"The Manson case is drawing to a close," he said. "While I have conducted it thus far, I feel that some one should share the responsibility with me. I wish to know positively if our firm is definitely employed in this case, and, if so, by whom. You know I was not present when the arrangements were made."

"The employment is perfectly regular," said I. "Mr. Virgil Manson came on behalf of his cousin, Homer. I consented that the firm should take the case, and Mr. Miller closed the contract with Dr. Manson, at the police station."

"Very well," said Judge Egert. "I wish to make no mistake now, for I find that the logic of circumstances has misled me as to the motive of the crime. It is a far more complex and much deeper crime than I imagined, one whose fiendishness and cruelty are almost beyond belief, an almost unparalleled example of the refinement of murder. No wonder it bewilders the mind."

"It bewilders me no more than your words do now," I ventured. "Don't

let your logic of circumstances carry you too far beyond the bounds of reason."

"All right, judge," he said, with a twinkle in his deep blue eyes. "Remember, you divide the responsibility with me. It will be your legal advice, as well as my logic of circumstances, that may condemn a fellow-mortal to death. There will be a meeting of all the parties connected with this case at the district attorney's office, to-morrow afternoon. Dr. Manson will be brought from the Tombs, and Miss Reath, the butler, the office-boy, the letter-writers and others will be there. The French method of confronting the accused with his accusers will be tested. The district attorney does not believe in my theory, but is willing to give me an opportunity to discover the slayer of Miss Sappho Manson."

It was a little after one o'clock the next day when Judge Egert left our offices. I could see that he was somewhat excited and perturbed. The two cousins, Milton and Virgil Manson, were with him, but they evidently did not understand the importance Judge Egert attached to the approaching interview with the district attorney and the witnesses in the case.

It was after four o'clock when Judge Egert returned to our offices. Mr. Miller and Mr. Freeman were with me in the consultation-room, and we all felt that a crisis was at hand. Judge Egert was quite pale as he entered the room.

"My partners," he said, "this is the last murder-case I shall ever undertake. I do not care to be both attorney and executioner. I feared this outcome. The slayer of Miss Sappho Manson is no more, and a corpse is lying in the office of the district attorney."

"You mean that Dr. Homer Manson, under pressure of the evidence, has committed suicide?" cried Mr. Miller.

"I did not say so," remarked Judge Egert, "but I may as well tell the story.

"When we assembled at the district attorney's office, there was evident

anxiety on the faces of all present. I stated my view of the logic of the circumstances in this case. The district attorney admitted its force, but denied its efficacy. I could see, however, that Dr. Manson felt much relieved. I reviewed the evidence and commented on the failure of Miss Reath to state the whole truth to the police. A shadow swept over her features, and for the first time that imperturbable woman changed color and trembled. I then detailed, rapidly and tersely, the manner in which, as I believed, the murder had been committed, and I spoke of the results of my investigation of the facts, detailing the events immediately following the murder, including the fact that two people were seen running on Twenty-ninth street. Then I suddenly told the story of the attempted fabrication of an alibi. I did this graphically, while more than one of my hearers turned pale with emotion. When I ceased speaking, it was apparent that all present were convinced as to who was really guilty. After a moment's pause I said that, to guard against any mistake, I would now name the criminal. Before I could do so, however, one of those present sprang up and burst into tears.

"It will be necessary to take this person into custody," said the district attorney. "I will ring for the police."

"No; don't do that," exclaimed the criminal. "I have suffered agony enough without that. I can endure no more. Give me pen and paper, and I will narrate the events of that evening. Judge Egert, however, has correctly stated the more important ones."

The writing materials were furnished and the confession written. As the pen moved we could hear an occasional sob of emotion, as though the writer were yielding to some overwhelming mental agony. The writing continued for several minutes, and then we noticed that the writer was sitting motionless. Suddenly, there was a falling forward of the body and the head rested on the table. We all rushed forward, and as we did so we

noticed a strong odor of bitter almonds, and recognized that prussic acid had done its deadly work—the hand which had slain Miss Sappho Manson was cold in death.

"Well, the Manson case is ended, for the confession had been signed and the guilt had been acknowledged even had this not been done. Here are the last words written by one who has passed into the great hereafter. I will read the confession:

"My hand alone slew Miss Sappho Manson. My confession can make but little difference. The 'be all and the end all' are close at hand for me, now. For years I was a slave to the caprices of this woman who was deaf to all the higher aspirations of my nature, and when she felt she could not much longer possess her hoarded wealth, as a reward for my patient devotion she cheated me of my rights, under the influence of one of the most cold-blooded, cruel, heartless men in the whole world. This man has been my evil genius. It seems as if he was born to balk me in all my wishes. I knew of his presence in the house and I wished to overhear his remarks, especially regarding me.

"I slipped into the hall and from there into the unlighted parlor. The door of the reception-room was ajar. I could hear the doctor talking of his love for his sweetheart. Yes, he could talk of love, but he cared nothing for the agony endured by others. I heard him speak of the scarf he had brought. Suddenly, the possibilities of the case occurred to me. The quarrel regarding Miss Arnold gave me the idea. Here, unless my wrongs were righted, I could at once have revenge on the only two persons in the world I hated—and such a great revenge! The doctor's overcoat was hanging on the hat-rack. It was the work of a moment to go to it, extract a scalpel from his instrument-case and tear a button from the overcoat. By the side of the hat-rack was a heavy piece of wood, with an iron slit in the end, which was used for turning the keys of the chandeliers.

"It was ten minutes to nine when the doctor came out, softly as a cat, closed the door of the reception-room, put on his overcoat and slipped very quietly out of the front door. There was a smile of cruel satisfaction on his smug features. I at once entered the reception-room. I spoke of the will and its injustice. Miss Manson refused to change it and mocked at my distress. I had the stick in my hand. I struck one powerful blow and almost immediately plunged the scalpel into her heart. She sank with merely a stifled cry. I threw the button on the floor, placed the stick where I had found it, and at once left the

house, slamming the front door. So far, I had done all possible to accomplish my purpose. The fact that my being left-handed might attract attention to me never entered my mind. That my subsequent acts led to the proof of my guilt I regard as simply an unlucky accident. I can say, with my last words, that my only regret is that my revenge has been incomplete. The hand of the law shall never be laid upon me. With the little vial in my pocket I have the means to end it all, and at once."

"That is all the confession, except the name," said Judge Egert. "Of course, you all can tell the name that is signed to it."

"If Dr. Manson is not guilty, which is still hard to believe," said Mr. Miller, "there can be only one other person who killed Miss Manson—her secretary, Miss Lily Reath, who, in that case, deceived the police regarding the facts. I have had a dim suspicion that she might be guilty."

"What say you, Howard?" asked Judge Egert, turning to our junior partner.

"I believe it was John Meade, the butler. He had nerved himself for the act by his visits to the various saloons," responded Mr. Freeman.

"And you, judge?" said my old partner, turning to me.

"I still think it was the office-boy," said I; "when the young are vicious they are very vicious. Which of our surmises is correct?"

"None of them," replied Judge Egert. "The hand which struck down Miss Sappho Manson was the hand of one whom I suspected when I had fully considered Miss Reath's story regarding the quarrel over the will and pondered on the murdered woman's last words. The murderous motive was not revenge alone, as the confession states; it was also the sordid one of inheriting a fortune, not only from the dead woman, but from an innocent man executed for a murder committed by this inhuman criminal. Love, jealousy, envy, hate, revenge, hypocrisy and damnable cunning had made the mind of this monster a hell of seething passions."

"The one who lies dead in the district attorney's office is the rejected

suitor of Miss Lilian Arnold, the disinherited nephew of Miss Sappho Manson, the bitter enemy of his successful cousin, whose heir he hoped to be, the famed, but false, philanthropist, Mr.

Virgil Manson, who, planning a murder to incriminate another, while fabricating an alibi for himself, has fallen a victim to the logic of circumstances."



ULLABY OF THE CELTIC CHILD

SLEEP, little child,
 Dream, O mine own!
Winds may be wild,
 Thou'rt not alone.
Mother and sire
 Watch o'er thy dream;
Soft burns the fire;
 Out of its gleam
Back come those eyes
 Dead long ago,
Back come the sighs,
 Laughter and woe!
Round thy small bed
 Gathers a host,
Drawn from the dead,
 Each a dear ghost!
All of thy race
 Watch o'er thy sleep,
Breathe on thy face
 Benisons deep!
Sleep, little child,
 Dream, O mine own!
Winds may be wild,
 Thou'rt not alone!

VICTOR PLARR.



CHILDISH FOLLY

NODD—What! Married eight years and got seven children? That's doing pretty well, old man.

TODD—Yes; a great deal better than we expected.



PLATONIC affection is a vegetarian diet of love.

THE TRAGEDY OF A CARRIAGE-CALL

By Roy Melbourne Chalmers

MRS. MARTIN wished to go at half-past ten, because the reception was dreadfully slow. Only a few of her acquaintances were there; she didn't like Mrs. Blake, her hostess; Mr. Blake, who was charming, had not put in an appearance at all; her own very inconsiderate husband was devoting an unreasonable amount of time to somebody whom she despised; her new gown had failed dismally—and there was not much of anything to eat! So she plucked Mr. Martin by the sleeve and told him.

At the prospect of tearing himself away from the woman who was despised, he looked the embodiment of discontent—but, being a wise man, he foresaw the disadvantage of refusing his wife and preferred to sacrifice a few moments of self-gratification for a week of domestic peace—if not felicity.

Shortly afterward the man on the street was shouting boisterously for "91," their hired carriage. They were ready, waiting in the small room off the hall.

Five minutes passed, but "91" had not responded. The man with the giant lungs stuck to it perseveringly; "91" echoed and reechoed up and down the street.

Mrs. Martin was, of course, annoyed at the delay. Her husband did not seem to care much—he was looking toward the drawing-room, with a speculative air.

"No, you don't!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, suddenly comprehending. She was too late; the despised woman had caught Mr. Martin's eye—well,

she had seen him waiting, and she came.

Twenty minutes passed—dragged, for Mrs. Martin. The despised being wouldn't move. "91" was still derelict. The man with the big voice kept it up like a Trojan. The coachmen along the street had long since considered "91" as a popular joke, and "91" systematically passed from mouth to mouth, pitched in every grade of voice known to the vocal specialist. But "91" was lost, obviously.

At eleven Mrs. Martin was furious. To feel *de trop* when you are with your domestic partner and somebody else must be distressing, especially under these circumstances.

She now positively decided to walk. She had wished to go long before, but for the sake of conventional appearance and a décolleté had waited. When she expressed her intention the despised lady would not listen to it.

"We can all go in my carriage," said she; and, in spite of the remonstrances on Mrs. Martin's part, they went.

And "91"?

A solitary carriage stood near the house at three o'clock. The horses were fast asleep, the driver was in a somnolent state. The man with the magnificent clarion voice had disappeared. The caterer's men had melted away in the distance, with their ice-cream. In the house the musical strains were long ago hushed and the windows were dimmed.

After some hesitancy the lonely driver, benumbed by long sitting, crawled to the pavement and, go-

ing up the steps, rang the bell. Finally, a butler in his night-clothes shivered at the door.

"Is anybody here going home in a carriage?" asked the driver, in a forlorn way.

"Lord!" exclaimed the butler, starting violently, "are you '91'?"

A horrible suspicion seized the driver. He fumbled in his pocket and pulled out a carriage-check. Straining his eyes he read it by the subdued light from the hall—then utterly collapsed.

"I thought it was '16'!" he murmured, feebly.



SONG

(IN VENICE)

THAT I with thee, along the tideless stream,
Might idly float—as night's deep purples stretch
A canopy, and moonlit towers etch
Their grace of line upon the wave—and dream
Of joys to be!

That I with thee, whilst music steals the ears,
Should let mine eyes alone reveal the sign
Of heart desire, and find my fate in thine,
•Whose light of love gives hope to all the years,
And life to me!

That I with thee, full-furled the hurrying sail,
In some soft shallop, silken-hung, might drift
To where the mystic sunset portals lift
Their burnished gold—and find, behind the veil,
New ecstasy!

HARVEY MAITLAND WATTS.



AT THE BALL

THE ROSE—The violet affects to be so modest and shrinking!

THE ORCHID—Don't you believe it, my dear. I saw her pass just now with a very low-cut gown.



AFTER THE EXPULSION

EVE—I'm so sorry!

ADAM—Too bad! It was a fool's paradise.

AN EXPERIMENT OF JIMMY ROGERS'S

By Justus Miles Forman

"I TELL you, it won't do," said Livingstone, setting his glass down very hard on the little marble-topped table. "The man may be a very good sort in his way, and I don't say he's not; he may be honest and generous and good-hearted and anything else you like, but he's not a gentleman. He has not had either the birth or the breeding of a gentleman, and I say you've no right to inflict him on your friends and my friends socially. I'll admire him all you like, but I don't wish to present him to the girls I know, or introduce him into places where he's obviously not at home. Eh, what? Give me a cigarette."

"Now, that's all rot, you know," said Jimmy Rogers, squirming about in an irritated fashion. "You've a great lot of fool conservative prejudices that make you blind to the chap's real worth—and yet, I never knew a man who went about doing so many extraordinary things as you do. You're not what I call consistent. Now, Lawson may lack a sort of outside varnish, because he's had a rough life. He hasn't had time to learn some of the little things that we think are important, but he's worth about six of either of us. He's a man."

"Six of you, possibly," murmured Mr. Livingstone in gentle correction.

"You know as well as I do," continued Jimmy Rogers, "that there's no more promising sculptor in the Quarter. And you know, too, that he has done a lot of jolly-fine things for other chaps who were in hard luck. He practically supported that poor young Sewell, who was starving on oatmeal and water over in the rue Vavin.

And Lawson himself had no money to spare. I say it's a cursed shame that such a man shouldn't be able to go about among the sort of people whose acquaintance he's entitled to. He'd soon pick up the little tricks if he were given a chance."

Livingstone shook his head. "You're all wrong," said he, "but I've no hope whatever of making you see it. I tell you the man's character has nothing to do with the question. As I said before, I'm ready to admire him, but I'm not ready to take him to teas and dinners and things. He doesn't belong. He hasn't been trained to it, and, if you try to force him into that sort of thing, you'll get into trouble. You take my word for it. The common or garden potato," he argued, venturing ambitiously into metaphor, "is, I am told, a most useful and important plant—we couldn't have *pommes soufflées* without it—but it is out of place, not to say absurd, in a rose garden."

"Rose garden!" sneered Jimmy Rogers; "rose garden! Meaning the Anglo-American colony here in Paris, I suppose. I like your choice of words. What particular sort of rosebud do you think you are, now, you—you woodland violet! Oh, you make me ill!"

Livingstone rose with great dignity and threw a two-franc piece down beside his little pile of price-marked saucers.

"There is no arguing with you," said he, "nor convincing you of anything. You've got a very silly notion in your head, and I suppose you'll go and act on it. But, mind you, I'll be no party to your nonsense. I warn

you, you will get into trouble. I am going home to dress for dinner." He paused at the curb, with one foot on the step of a *fiacre*, and looked back to see where his chum sat glowering under the awning of the café. "You might enter upon your career of instruction," he suggested, helpfully, "by telling your protégé that tan boots with a frock coat are seldom seen in the best houses. He has a fancy for the combination, I notice."

Jimmy Rogers cursed.

Young Lawson was a sculptor from somewhere in the Western States of America. His early training, like that of many other good men, had been in modeling architectural ornamentation in stucco and in making clay models for ornate and very inartistic tombstones; but he had a genuine love for his art and the capacity for taking infinite pains. He was a student under Denys Puesch. As Jimmy Rogers had said, he had not lived an easy life, and the constant struggle to keep body and soul together had left him small leisure or opportunity to cultivate the social graces. Withal, he was a very frank and open-hearted young man, and seemed to have many excellent and sterling qualities.

Jimmy Rogers had met the man at the Art Club on the Quai de Conti, which he and Gerald Livingstone had fits of frequenting, and it had seemed to him that here was an opportunity for doing a worthy man a very good turn. He knew the sort of people among whom young Lawson went about, and it seemed to him rather a pity that so good a fellow should be wasting himself in this way and should see nothing of a social circle which would both appreciate and help him. Rogers spoke to a number of people on the subject, and was surprised and rather disgusted to find that most of them shared Gerald Livingstone's views. It seemed to him that they were very narrow and intolerant and over-conservative. But two or three of the girls to whom he spoke were very nice about it, and said that they would be glad to have him bring

Mr. Lawson to call on one of their days. And these young women immediately rose a most surprising number of degrees in Jimmy Rogers's estimation. He told one or two of them so.

Livingstone went, one afternoon about a week later, to call on a certain American girl in the avenue de l'Observatoire. He had quite forgotten Jimmy Rogers's missionary scheme, and was consequently very much surprised and not a little annoyed to find that young man drinking tea and acting, as it were, the combined showman and conversational buffer between Lawson and the girl.

When Livingstone entered the room the sculptor was seated on the edge of a deep-stuffed chair. He had carefully parted the skirts of his coat when he sat down, and they flowed voluminously to the floor on either side of him, like a woman's riding habit. He held his tea-cup, with a biscuit balanced on the saucer's edge, awkwardly before him, in stiff, unaccustomed hands, and his feet, freed at Jimmy Rogers's tactful hint from the yellow boots, shone resplendent in a vast expanse of patent leather. He was obviously ill at ease and very much embarrassed; but, instead of remaining silent and learning by observation how to conduct himself, he strove to cover this embarrassment and to make it plain how perfectly at home he was, by talking a great deal in a loud and nervous voice. Also, he made many foolish and unnecessary little *faux pas*, from which the exercise of a bit of tact might have saved him.

His nervousness increased as Livingstone entered, and he lost the spoon and the biscuit from his tea-saucer as he rose to his feet, along with Jimmy Rogers and the hostess. He had always disliked Livingstone, for no particular reason save that Livingstone was so far and away the most popular young man in Paris, and was, with no apparent effort, everything that Lawson had always wished to be, everything that Lawson was not. He had even felt a certain disadvantage in Livingstone's presence, and had taken

a malevolent pleasure in repeating to other men at the club or at the atelier that the other was, after all, nothing but an idle *poseur*, a silly young snob with more money than was good for him, who fancied himself in the rôle of social arbiter and drawing-room pet. But, for all this, he was ever ready to put an unnecessary amount of effusion into his replies to Livingstone's civil greetings and to pose as Livingstone's friend before the *nouveaux*.

He was very much annoyed that the "drawing-room pet" should have appeared at just this moment, for, in spite of his elaborate pretension, he knew well enough that he himself lacked something of social polish, though in what particular he could not see. He noted, with a lowering eye, Livingstone's perfect ease and assurance of manner in greeting the hostess and Jimmy Rogers and himself, and in taking his tea-cup and picking out the biscuits he liked, as if he gave no thought at all to how it would appear. Lawson could not understand this unconsciousness of bearing. He thought it must be another pose and he determined to show Livingstone that other people than himself could be at home in a drawing-room.

So, he sat forward in his chair again, rather flushed as to cheeks and bright as to eyes, and took upon himself the burden of the conversation. To do him justice, he was not, as a rule, a particularly vain or dictatorial man, but his unfamiliar surroundings and the desperate effort he was making to appear at his ease made him quite lose his head, and he became presently aware that no one but himself was saying anything beyond an occasional "yes" or "no."

The discovery gave him a warm little glow of triumph. They should see that he was as good as any of them. He shot a quick glance at Livingstone, but that gentleman's face expressed nothing but a grave and polite interrogation. He was, however, surprised to observe that Jimmy Rogers had turned somewhat red and appeared both uncomfortable and

restless. Perhaps he was not feeling well, or was thinking of something else. Lawson wished that Rogers would pay better attention, for he particularly wished his sponsor to see that he was doing him credit, as it were.

Then, after a moment, Jimmy Rogers rose, setting his cup on the tea-table, and said that they must be going on.

"Going on?" cried Lawson, in dismay; "going on? Why, we haven't been here half an hour. Nonsense!" And the girl smiled politely and said that Mr. Lawson was quite right, they had hardly arrived yet. But Jimmy Rogers only turned a little redder and insisted that they must go, till he finally bore his grumbling protégé out of the room. It seemed to Lawson a rather absurd thing to put on a frock coat and go some distance for a call of half an hour's duration. He could not understand it at all.

When the two men had left, the girl turned about to Mr. Livingstone, dropping her hands into her lap and making a little face of half-amused relief.

"I am glad you came," said she, "very glad! It has been rather awful, really."

Livingstone laughed. "Jimmy has periods of being such an ass," he said. "I told him not to inflict this chap on people and a lot of others told him as well, but you can't convince Jimmy of anything. He thinks he is doing something very fine, something that he'll look back upon one day with satisfaction. As a matter of fact, he'll only get himself disliked by every one, including Lawson, if he doesn't even come some nasty cropper."

"Oh, I don't know," objected the girl. "Aren't you going it a bit strong? Of course, the man is atrociously impossible now, but he may learn the tricks. You're such a conservative," she smiled, "for a really very unconventional young man!"

Livingstone wagged a stubborn

head. "Never you mind about me," he said. "Just you mark my words; Jimmy will come a copper with that colt of his. The man's not merely ignorant, he's not the right sort. You can't teach him anything, because he's quite certain that he knows it all, already. He is a good sculptor, I'm told, and I know that he's a good sort in other ways, but he doesn't belong here." And Livingstone waved an explanatory hand about the little drawing-room.

The girl seemed to be considering. "Oh, I don't know," she said, again. "I think you're a bit prejudiced, aren't you? Now, with some one to take him in hand, he might— After all, he's not so dreadful. They say he is one of the coming men, full of talent. I like men who amount to something in their profession." She paused a moment, insultingly, to make this tell, but Livingstone refused to meet her eye. "And, beyond that," she went on, "he's rather handsome and—and generally attractive. He has a sort of force about him somewhere. I can't explain it; perhaps you know what I mean. It draws you, sort of—I wonder," she said, frowning thoughtfully, "I wonder if—I don't believe he has ever seen much of women."

"No?" said Mr. Livingstone, politely.

"Well, not the right sort of women, anyhow," said the girl, turning pink. "I think it might be worth while for some woman to take him up, to see what is in him; yes, very worth while."

Livingstone made a little exclamation of disgust. "Well, I hope the woman won't be you," he declared, "or any other girl whom I know. I tell you, he's not the right sort. And I rise to remark," he continued, angrily, "that, if you won't talk about anything but that Lawson man, I shall go away. I didn't come here to talk about him; I came to tell you that that coaching party for next Friday is all arranged. I am to get Howlett's coach, you know, with that

black pair, Polisson and Voyou, for leaders. They will probably run away, or tip us over or something, so it may be quite worth while. I'm going to drive. Will you sit with me? Jimmy's going, of course, and Lulu de Vignot and old lady Hartwell and the Honorable Molly and, I think, Dicky Cheltenham."

"Sit with you?" cried the girl; "of course I'll sit with you! Are you quite sure you wish me to? You've such a deprecatory way of asking people to do things that they'd give their heads to do. I shall brag about it to every girl I know."

"Oh, rot!" said Livingstone. "Then it's all right. Friday, remember; ten o'clock. Now I'm off."

"Oh, are you going?" said the girl. "I wish you wouldn't. Good-bye, then. Oh, and I really didn't mean what I said, you know—about that Lawson man. Honestly, I didn't; I was only joking. Good-bye."

Nevertheless, Livingstone, hurrying through the Luxembourg Gardens two days later, ran upon the girl in company with young Lawson. The two were strolling along one of the flower-bordered paths near the Watteau monument, and Lawson had returned to the dreadful yellow boots and had added a cravat of passionate red. The girl's color deepened perceptibly when she met Livingstone's astonished eyes, and she gave him a sidelong look in which amusement was blended with that expression seen most often upon the faces of very young people who have been caught stealing jam.

But Livingstone went on home to the studio in the Boulevard Montparnasse, using language unworthy of a gentleman, and there fell bitterly upon Jimmy Rogers, who was engaged in innocent pleasantries with Marcus Aurelius.

"Whom do you suppose I've just seen strolling about together in the Luxembourg Gardens?" demanded Livingstone, hurling his stick and gloves on the floor, where they were at once seized upon in a spirit of jest

by Marcus Aurelius, and thoroughly masticated.

"How should I know?" said his chum, watching the dog. "I'm no mind-reader."

"Well, it was your Lawson pal and Alison Cartwright," said Livingstone.

Jimmy Rogers stared.

"The devil!" said he, very slowly.

"And I hope you're satisfied," continued Livingstone, in a tone of ill-concealed rage; "you, with your cursed missionary schemes! I've known you to do a lot of idiotic things from time to time, and I dare say I've told you so before, but this beats your own record! Do you realize what I said? Alison Cartwright walking about the Luxembourg Gardens with that underbred gorilla of a sculptor! I met Sara Bamborough yesterday, and she told me that you'd been at their house with the man. Got me in a corner, she did, and talked the silliest sort of rot about him for a quarter of an hour. She asked me if I'd ever noticed his wonderful eyes; said there was something fierce and primitive and compelling about him. Oh, she made me fairly ill!"

"Well, I don't see what you're attacking me about it for!" cried the exasperated Rogers, desperately. "If a lot of silly girls, who ought to know better, wish to act like fools over the man, let 'em! I'm not their nurse. They're grown up, I suppose."

"It's all your fault!" insisted Livingstone, stubbornly. "They'd never have met the chap but for you. You're responsible for whatever may happen—and I'd like to tell you that I wouldn't care to have the responsibility on my shoulders, either. What if one of these girls goes and falls in love with him? What will you do then?"

"I'll jolly well brain him with an axe, that's what I'll do!" raved Rogers, wildly, "and I'll brain you, too, if you don't let me alone. Haven't I troubles enough, without your adding to them? I'd like to know what in heaven's name those girls see in him to make such a row over! He's a

good chap, as I've always said, and he deserves to go among the right people, but, my word! he's nothing to go mad over. What do they see in him?"

"Oh, I don't know," growled Livingstone. "I suppose he's different from the men they've known. Women always like something odd. They're always running off with coachmen and grooms and things, when there are plenty of the right sort of men about. If you should ask me, I should say, brain your man now, before the thing goes any further. Don't wait."

And, indeed, as time went on, Jimmy Rogers wished, more than once, that he had taken his chum's advice and brained the man in the beginning; for Lawson, by some strange freak of that lady, Fate, appeared to be making a veritable success in the easy-going social life of the colony. He quickly became independent of the aid and guidance of Jimmy Rogers and, aware of the rapid cooling of that young man's enthusiastic zeal, began to avoid him and to extend his acquaintance by other means.

Of course, there were many people who refused to receive Lawson, or, if it was possible, even to meet him at the club dances and teas and such, where they found themselves under the same roof. Also, many of the people, who had, through kindness or curiosity in the beginning, taken him up, were driven, later on, to rid themselves of him, because of his constant exhibitions of tactlessness and gaucherie; for in these matters he seemed to make no improvement, his conceit and his utter inability to see his faults rendering any outside precept or example quite useless. Still, he went to many houses and was often seen in public places by the perturbed Rogers, in company with young women who should have known better.

And among the young women, probably the most prominent was Miss Alison Cartwright. She had

made, on the occasion of the coaching trip to Versailles, a half-humorous attempt to explain the stroll in the Luxembourg Gardens, on the grounds that she had met Lawson on the street and that he had walked home with her through the gardens. But this explanation the disgusted Livingstone was so ungallant as to disbelieve *in toto*.

After this, however, she made no secret of her very obvious interest in the young sculptor. She was often seen with him on the street, and at teas and dances he seemed always to be at her side. He was such a fixture at the apartment in the avenue de l'Observatoire that Livingstone very pointedly ceased his calls there, and the distraught and lymphatic Mrs. Cartwright was, on all sides, besieged with inquiries as to her daughter's engagement.

Meantime, the relations at the studio in the Boulevard Montparnasse were strained to a painful degree. Jimmy Rogers went about under a pall of unlighted gloom, and his life was made utterly cheerless by the frequent and unbridled expression of his chum's feelings toward him. In point of fact, he was genuinely alarmed at the serious and wholly unexpected outcome of his well-meant endeavors. And Livingstone made it plain, with unnecessary repetition, where the responsibility lay. Jimmy Rogers, himself, still persisted in his high opinion of the sculptor's qualities and legitimate claims upon society, and still insisted that the man was a diamond in the rough, and many other figurative things of the sort. But some of Lawson's vigorous methods of warfare, and, above all, this last development involving Alison Cartwright, went quite beyond Jimmy's sense of fitness and worried him excessively.

So anxious did he become, as time went on, that, goaded to action one day by a particularly bitter attack from Livingstone, he took his courage in his hands and went to the avenue de l'Observatoire. He chose, for obvious reasons, a day which was not

Miss Cartwright's proper "afternoon," and he went early, on the better chance of finding her alone. The sculptor was, to his relief, not in evidence, but Miss Cartwright greeted his somber countenance with unconcealed mirth.

"Have you, too, come to plead with me?" she demanded. "Every one does, nowadays. Still, you know, you're not quite the one to do it, are you? You're the responsible party. Dear me, doesn't it weigh on you?"

"Oh, it's all very well to laugh," said Jimmy Rogers, gloomily, "but, I say, it's no laughing matter. Yes, if you like, it does weigh on me. I expect I shall have nervous prostration soon. Jerry gives me no peace. Very bitter about it, Jerry is."

"Oh, Mr. Livingstone!" said the girl, and her smile somehow lost, for a moment, its spontaneity. "Yes, I suppose Mr. Livingstone would be bitter about it. He wouldn't understand, would he? He's such a conservative! He and Mr. Lawson never would understand each other, I fancy. Each of them is everything that the other is not; I—I think I'm sorry about Mr. Livingstone, a little."

"Do you know," said Jimmy Rogers, looking up into her face with puzzled, narrowed eyes, "do you know, I'd always fancied, somehow, that you and Jerry—that you'd rather—well, in fact, you know—"

The girl looked at him for an instant and then out of the window, and her voice came lower.

"Had you?" said she; "had you? And—and he, Jerry? Had you fancied that he—?"

"Why," hesitated Jimmy Rogers, and turned red. "Why, I don't know. Why not? Of course, one can never tell about Jerry. There's that little enameled and jeweled cross thing he wears—that order. I suppose he—Well, he has always been different since he had that, but—"

"And," said the girl, rather low, looking once more into his face, "and even if I did. What then?"

"Well, then, I just don't understand

all this present business!" cried Jimmy Rogers. "Is it possible that any one who's ever cared about Jerry Livingstone could care for—for this chap? Are you engaged to this Lawson man? That's what I want to know. Are you?"

But the girl laughed again, very amusedly. "No," she said; "no, I'm not. It's not at all like that. Dear me, I wonder how often I've had to answer that question in the last fortnight. I'm going to have a little placard printed and hung up on the wall here, or about my neck: 'No, I am not engaged to Albert Lawson, or to any one else!' Don't you think that would be a good thing? It would save me such a lot of explaining."

But Jimmy Rogers refused to be amused. "I don't understand it at all," said he, with a melancholy shake of the head. "If you're not engaged to him, or are not going to be, what do you see such a lot of him for? Eh, what?"

The girl twisted a bit uneasily in her chair, and frowned out of the window. Her hands pulled and strained at the lace handkerchief that lay in her lap.

"I don't know," she said, at last, pausing between the words. Her voice seemed puzzled and a little anxious. "Upon my word, I don't know. He—he's something new, something strange—perhaps, that is it. He's not the sort of man I've always known and gone about with. Yes, perhaps that is it. And yet I don't think it's that alone; I think there must be more, something deeper, more personal than all that. Upon my word, I don't know." She turned about to Jimmy Rogers, throwing out her two hands beside her in a little helpless gesture.

"He—interests me," she said, simply; "he interests me more than any man I've seen in a very long time. Oh, yes, I know what you would say, what they've all been saying—that he's not my sort, that he is loud and tactless and—yes, I'll be quite frank—

ill-bred. He is ill-bred. He is constantly doing things that grate on me horribly, but—there's something about him—I can't describe it; I can't name it. He's strong, somehow. He's big and deep and earnest and illimitably strong. He draws one."

She leaned forward in her chair, clasping and unclasping her hands, and her face, turned up toward Jimmy Rogers, was drawn and anxious and very eager. She had gone far beyond joking.

"Oh, Mr. Rogers," she cried, "you know him better than these others know him. It was you who saw the man in him and brought him to our notice. Tell me why he attracts me so; tell me why I can't leave off thinking of him—why I want to be with him, to hear him talk, even when he boasts and brags so; tell me why he makes other men seem so futile and commonplace?"

Jimmy Rogers made a gesture of gloomy irritation. "Don't ask me!" said he. "How should I know? I'm nothing but a mere man. All I can say is that, if I thought you were in love with that chap, I'd murder him—even if it was I who brought him here."

"Oh, it's nothing like that," said she; "nothing at all like that. I'm in no danger of falling in love with him and I'm in no danger of marrying him. It's just—why, he interests me," she said again, looking at Jimmy Rogers with her anxious frown. She seemed to think that he should understand what no man has ever understood.

"He's strong," she said again, nodding, "and he's strange. He's something out of a world I've never known—I wonder if that's it. He leads a different life; he thinks different thoughts; he has quite another scale of values for—for things—I wonder if that's it? Women are queer, aren't they? But, oh, yes, he's very strong. I—sometimes I'm afraid, just a little. What if he should carry me off into his world? What if he should prove even stronger than I know?" She

was looking out of the window into the green tree-tops of the avenue de l'Observatoire and over them to the Luxembourg Gardens and the Palais beyond. She seemed almost to have forgotten that Jimmy Rogers was in the room.

"What if he should make me fall in love with him?" she said, smiling, with wide eyes, "faults and all, ill-breeding and conceit and gaucherie and coarseness and all! I wonder—I wonder——"

"Oh, drop it!" cried Jimmy Rogers, irritably. "Don't go on that way; you get on my nerves. I tell you he mustn't make you fall in love with him; it won't do. You know what I think of the man; you know why I brought him here and to other houses. I think he's a good sort, honest and earnest and talented and all that. I think he deserves more consideration than he has ever had. I say that in time, a good bit of time, he may be fit to marry anybody. But, hang it, he isn't yet—not by a great deal! He doesn't belong. Jerry's right, in a way. Maybe I was a fool to take the man about. I hadn't any notion that anything like this would come of it. Fall in love with him, indeed! You couldn't if you should try."

"Oh, of course, you're right," said the girl, a bit wearily. "I didn't really mean what I said, you know—you're not really going? It's so early! Come again soon, won't you? I—I should be glad. Not so very many people come—any more. Mr. Livingstone doesn't come at all. Of course, it's all my fault, I know. Still—ah, well, good-bye."

At the door Jimmy Rogers met young Lawson and passed him with a scowling nod. He had some thought of turning back, but after a moment's hesitation decided that it would be inexcusably nasty of him, and so he went on, out into the street.

At the sound of Lawson's step the girl turned from the window where she had been standing, and a little flush came into her cheeks.

"Ah," she said, "it is you!" And if Jimmy Rogers had been there he

would have cursed very bitterly at the tone, for it was softer than her ordinary voice, softer and lower—the tone that a woman unconsciously reserves for only one man.

"Oh, yes," said the sculptor; "yes, it's me, all right. Did you think I wouldn't come? I haven't been missing many days, have I?"

He raised her hand in his, very high, and gave it a single limp shake, a most absurd parody of a bygone fashion. The girl bit her lip to hide a smile and her cheeks flushed again, but with annoyance. He was at his worst in this sort of thing. All his manners, of which he had a distressing store, were laboriously acquired parodies. One would have believed them burlesques, if the man's satisfaction with them had not been so obviously serious. His natural handshake was quick and strong and quite without affectation; but from some unknown source he had acquired this new and ludicrous one, and exhibited it at every possible opportunity.

He sat down in a big chair by the window, parting the skirts of his coat and adjusting the knees of his trousers. The girl, moving the tea things about on the table by her side, watched him with a little frown. She was always able, in these first few moments, to consider the man critically, to be annoyed, and even disgusted, by his absurdities of manner; and to-day Jimmy Rogers's very emphatic language had put a certain edge on her critical faculty. It was only later, after he had begun to talk, after she had fallen under the spell of his strange attraction for her, that she forgot all things external, that she no longer saw the conscious awkwardness, the foolish little attempts to ape such men as Livingstone and Rogers and their set.

She watched him quite coolly, as she made the tea, and compared his bearing and manner with that of the man who had been sitting in the same chair ten minutes before, and it was not a very pleasant comparison. But from this she fell to watching his face, for, contrary to his habit, he was rather

quiet, speaking seldom, and his face was good. It had no great refinement of line, it was bold and rough-hewn and square; but she found it satisfying. It was lined about the eyes and mouth and at the nostrils; but she liked these lines. They stood for strength and character, she thought. Any man could have told her at a glance that most of them stood for certain very disagreeable traits indeed, or were the result of a not over-credible mode of life; but this she could not be expected to know.

"Mr. Rogers has been here," said she. "Did you meet him outside?"

The sculptor frowned over his tea. "Oh, yes, I met him," said he. "He didn't look very good-natured—gave me a scowl as he went out. I wonder if he thought I cared for his scowls. Rogers is a good-enough fellow, but he is apt to think a little too much of his own importance. Just now he has no use for me. He's jealous."

Miss Cartwright gasped. "Jealous?" she cried; "Jimmy Rogers jealous? For heaven's sake, about what?"

"Why, you!" said the sculptor; "you, of course! He and that Livingstone ass are all broken up because I've cut them out with you. They'd like to throw me into the river."

"Oh, what perfect nonsense!" cried the girl, sharply. "There has been no cutting out of anybody, nor anything of the sort; and I must ask you not to call Mr. Livingstone an ass, because he is not one and because he is a friend of mine, a much older friend than yourself."

Then, after a moment, she put out a hand toward the astonished and outraged Lawson, with a little smile of depreciation.

"Don't be angry!" she begged. "I didn't mean to be fierce, but you—you're not at your best saying things like that. I don't like to hear them. Don't you see that I wish you at your best always? Let us leave Mr. Rogers and Mr. Livingstone out of it and talk about something else. What have you been at work upon to-day?"

"Work?" said the sculptor, impa-

tiently; "I haven't been working at all. Why do you always want to talk about work? A man can't be slaving all the time. A man has his social relations to think of. I'm sick of clay. I'm going to take a rest. How can I work and think of you at the same time?" he concluded, felicitously.

Miss Cartwright turned her face away, to hide a not altogether delighted expression. She knew that all this was mere affection, for Lawson, in spite of much that might be said in criticism of him, was a hard and conscientious worker, and she could not understand why he should choose this silly pose of a *flâneur*. Decidedly, he was not at his best to-day.

"I don't wish you to work and think of me at the same time," she said. "I wish you to think of me only when you are not working. And I do wish you to work. That's the best of you, don't you know?—your work. It's the best of any man—what he can do. Please don't be sick of clay. You're too much the master of it for that. You're to be great some day, and I'm to think that I have had a little bit of a part in it. We settled that long ago, don't you remember? Yes, you're to be great and famous, and I'm to be so proud just to know you! But you've a lot of work to do. Now, tell me all about that fountain sketch for Chicago. If only they'll take your design! Wouldn't it be a splendid chance? Wouldn't it, though?"

So, by dint of coaxing and a little flattery and a great deal of cleverness in suggesting the things which meant much to him, she started him on the subject of his work. And, as he went on, her eyes grew wide and deep and her breath came quicker, for here he was the man who had won so strange an influence over her. He forgot all his foolish manners, all his affectations and poses. They dropped from him like a garment, and he was, all at once, keen and strong and earnest and genuine—arrogant, over-certain of himself, as most strong men are, but this she rather liked than criticized. If only he might be always like this! If only

she might make him see how fine this side of him was and how belittling the other!

He talked for nearly an hour, and the girl listened, eager and alert. Then, at last, when he had finished, she gave a little sigh and dropped her hands into her lap.

"Yes," she said; "yes, I see. You make one see. It will be very good. Yes, you make one see—and feel. You're very strong. I was telling some one so, not very long since. Ah, well, now you must go, I'm afraid. I'm dining out, across the river, and I've to dress. Mother is always so disgusted when I'm late."

She rose and gave him her hand, smiling up into his face with that little mixture of admiration and—something else. He could not tell what else.

But the sculptor moved nearer, taking the hand in both his own, and held her eyes with his. "Yes," he said, "I'm strong—very strong. I'm too strong for the rest of them, Livingstone and Rogers and all those. I'm strong enough to take you away from them and keep you away. Don't listen to them when they talk to you about me. Oh, I know well enough that they do, all of them; I hear of it, often. That is what Rogers was here for, to-day. They say I don't belong here. They say that I'm not your kind, that you're making yourself ridiculous by going about with me. I tell you they're afraid of me. Don't you listen to them!" His speech, for all its arrogance and vanity, rang true. It was not the cheap vanity that so often marred him, and there was no pose about it.

"I'm strong enough to take you away from them," he said again. "I'll make myself your kind. You shall see."

The girl looked up into his face, square and set and frowning a little, and her breath quickened.

"I wonder," she said, very low, and her voice was uncertain, "I wonder if you could take me—away from them. I wonder if—you're strong

enough for that. Sometimes—I think you are. I—I don't—care for you—you know. Oh, not a bit; not the least bit—that way. But I wonder if you could—do it. They'd be amazed, wouldn't they? They'd never get over it, would they? They don't like you, you know. That is because they don't know you as—as I do. Even mother doesn't like you. I'm a great trial to her, nowadays. Oh, yes, you're very strong! I wonder—"

"I'll make you care!" said young Lawson, grimly. And still his good angel stood by him, for he brought out none of his silly mannerisms to weaken him. He was very much in earnest.

"I give you leave to—try," said she. "Ah, but not now! You must go now, please. I have to dress, you know. Good-bye—ah, good-bye. No! no!" He had raised to his lips the hand he held, but the girl snatched it suddenly from him, with crimson cheeks. The touch of his lips sent a little shudder of repulsion all through her, as if he had been something unclean.

The sculptor laughed and turned away. He thought it was merely a bit of girlish timidity. He had seen much the same thing before in other women. But, when he had gone out of the room, the girl stood staring at the portières with wide eyes, and her cheeks were still crimson. Unconsciously she rubbed with her handkerchief the hand that he had kissed, as if she were wiping off some stain.

Two days after this there was a dance given by a certain very well known English painter, who had a house with a great walled garden, in the rue Notre Dame des Champs. The painter's wife had asked young Lawson to the dance, because it was a big and not too exclusive affair, and because the painter, who was a democratic man, had told her that the young sculptor was interesting and talented, and deserved encouragement.

Some time about midnight, Jimmy

Rogers, who had just had a prospective and very pretty dance partner cut out from under his very arm by a man whom he disliked, was making for the buffet to drown his sorrow in drink. His way led him past one of the long French windows that stood open upon the garden, only a few inches above the level of the turf. From outside came the cool night air, with the gleam of many orange-paper lanterns and an occasional burst of laughter or the sound of a raised voice.

Then, all at once, from the soft gloom just beyond the window, came a scuffle of steps on the gravel and a smothered scream, low and very angry. Jimmy Rogers paused involuntarily, and, an instant later, a woman in white burst in through the window.

It was Miss Alison Cartwright and she was in a state of very obvious agitation. She did not at first see Jimmy, but turned, once she was inside, and looked back over her shoulder into the darkness from which she had come. She was shaking all over, and her cheeks blazed crimson. She scrubbed at one of them with her lace handkerchief, and her eyes were bright and angry.

Then young Lawson appeared in the window. He was half-laughing, half-puzzled, as if he could not make the situation out at all.

"Oh, come," he cried, "don't make such a row! It ain't anything. Why, what do you care? Come along!" The girl turned away from him, still breathing stormily, and her eyes fell on Jimmy Rogers. She went up to him at once, putting out a hand on his arm, but her eyes still rested on the awkward, embarrassed figure in the window.

"He—he tried to—kiss me!" she said, faintly. And her hand with its little lace handkerchief scrubbed again involuntarily at one flushed cheek. "The—brute! the brute! He tried to—kiss me!" She turned her angry eyes up to Jimmy Rogers's face and her hand closed fiercely upon his arm.

"Will you—thrash that—that person, Mr. Rogers?" she said; "and

have him turned out into the street? He is not—not fit to be here. Oh!" She shivered and her face drew into a contortion of disgust. She was very, very angry and quite unstrung.

"But I say, I—I don't—understand!" stammered the man in the window. "You said—you—How did I know you didn't want—What are you in such a rage about? Why, confound it, I—"

Jimmy Rogers offered his arm to the girl.

"May I take you to Mrs. Cartwright?" he asked, pleasantly. He jerked his head toward the other man as they moved away.

"You stop here, please," said he. "I've something to say—something to say to you." Then, when he had left Alison Cartwright beside her somnolent and nodding chaperon, he moved briskly off toward the open window, with a smile of pleased anticipation brightening his youthful countenance.

An hour later, Gerald Livingstone, who had found the dance rather dull, was gloomily making his way homeward along the Boulevard Montparnasse. The café at the foot of the Boulevard Raspail was still alight, and upon its terrace a solitary and dejected figure in evening dress sat huddled behind one of the little tables.

Livingstone glanced sharply at the man's face and was for passing on with no word, but something in the forlorn bearing held him against his will. He paused a moment, frowning, and finally turned and dropped into a chair across the table. The sculptor raised a dull eye. His appearance was somewhat disheveled.

"I've been thrashed," said he, simply, "thrashed and turned out into the street."

"Yes," said Livingstone, looking rather awkwardly away; "yes, I—know."

Lawson rubbed a hand across his brow and rested his head on the hand. "Why?" said he. And his eyes were, as they had been before, puzzled and

uncomprehending, almost pitiful. "What have I done?" he demanded. "I didn't do anything out of the way. What was all the row about? Why should she go into such a rage? I didn't expect she was going to take it like that. She told me, just the other day, that I—I had her permission to—make her care for me—if I could. Then I tried to—well, to kiss her hand, and she snatched it away and turned red. I thought she was shy. And to-night—why I only tried to kiss her, out there under those lanterns, and she—Jove, she went all to pieces! What did she do that for? What's the harm in kissing a girl? It ain't any crime, is it? Seems like she couldn't bear me to touch her, and yet she—why, the way she used to talk, you'd think—what the devil is it, anyhow?" He drew his hand again across his face, and his eyes, still puzzled and uncomprehending, besought the other man. "What is it? There isn't anything the matter with me, is there—is there? I'm no Zulu or Hottentot. Maybe I haven't been about with the people that you and Rogers live among. Maybe I'm awkward and don't know how to act in a drawing-room, but what's that? Girls don't cry and go into rages and have a fit when *you* try to kiss them. Where's the difference? I can't see it. Where's the difference?"

Livingstone stirred about, uneasily, in his chair. "Oh, I—I don't know!" said he. "I—shouldn't think so much of it, if I were you. I'm—well, I'm beastly sorry about it all—to-night, you know. I dare say she—I dare say she was a bit nervous. She—wasn't expecting anything like that, probably. Of course, Jimmy had to do what she—wanted. As for—oh,

well, the rest of it, you know, it's—it's hard to say anything about it." He raised the glass of liqueur and squinted through it, scowling uncomfortably. "We—we're rather a useless lot," said he, "rather a foolish lot, the crowd of us that does little else than play about, and I suppose we lay too much stress on little things that aren't, after all, so important; little things in the way of breeding and custom and—and all that sort of thing, don't you know? I suppose it's a bit hard, to see just our point of view, unless one's been born to it. I dare say it's not much of a point of view, anyhow. Perhaps you—you're just the least bit out of—out of your element, you know, with us. You're worth a dozen of us, you see. You're serious and full of talent and—and all that sort of thing. You haven't had time to cultivate the points we think are important. See what I mean? I'm talking awful rot, I expect, but it's something on that line. A chap can't step out of one world into another and be quite at home. Everything depends on the point of view, doesn't it? Wonder if any of this makes sense? I expect not."

The sculptor shook his head, wearily, and gave a little sigh. "I don't understand," said he; "I don't understand it at all. It's—beyond me, somehow. I ought to have stuck to my clay-punching, oughtn't I? I didn't belong here, probably, among you people. You're not my kind, after all. I don't know your language. I didn't belong."

"No," said Mr. Livingstone, nodding his head slowly; "I expect that is it. I'm sorry. No; I expect you didn't belong."



CURIOS TO KNOW

CORA—I shall never marry.
LAURA—What's his name?

FLEURETTE

(AN EPITAPH)

By Theodosia Garrison

THIS is she who was Fleurette—
Something hardly woman, just
One to smile at, scarce to trust;
Something delicate, unstyled
'Twixt a flower and a child,
Too exquisite to regret—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
She whose laughter was as light
As the moon snow in the night;
She whose heart was like a bird
At a whisper thrilled and stirred,
Bird-like ready to forget—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
She whose gay eyes never knew
One harsh tear to stain their blue;
She whose lips were never lent
Save to kiss or merriment,
Just for mirth and music set—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
She who never woman-wise
Carried love in her sweet eyes;
If she knew it—ah, who knows?
Can we ask love from a rose,
Pity from a violet?—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
Flower-like she lived and died
One brief Springtime glorified;
Something far too fair to stay
For the coming of things gray
When the winds of Winter fret—
Fleurette.

This is she who was Fleurette—
 To be sighed for, wished for, say
 As a rose of yesterday;
 Thought of 'twixt a smile and sigh,
 Yet to-day, I wonder why
 As I smile my eyes are wet—
 Fleurette.



THE FOOL AND LOVE

THE Fool wandered, disconsolate, along the thoroughfare called Life. He was a fool because his whole career had been one of failure; he was disconsolate, not because he was a fool, but because there are so many things in this world from which a fool is precluded.

He came to a place where men played at the game called "money-getting." Great fortunes were amassed by shrewd, businesslike methods. Plan after plan matured into gold, and, as the Fool looked on, he sighed.

"Alas," said he, "intelligence is necessary if one is to play at this game, and everybody knows that a fool has no intelligence."

He passed on until he came to a place where men were engaged at the game known as "fame-winning." Many struggled toward different goals. He noted how they overcame obstacle after obstacle; endured hardship after hardship; withstood temptation after temptation; but never lost sight of their purpose.

"Alas," he sobbed, "I cannot play this game, for it demands an all-absorbing ambition, and a fool never possessed such an ambition."

Then the Fool passed on and arrived at a place where men and women played the game of Love. There were many men wearing their lives away in an endeavor to win riches, with which to gratify the idle whims of the women they loved. Others received but laughter and scorn, though they gave their very heart's blood.

Long and attentively the Fool watched the game and the players, marking well the different methods of play. And he laughed, joyously.

"Here, at last, is a game I can play," he said, "for a heart is the only requirement, and even a fool possesses a heart."

And as he entered his name in the lists, he added:

"Here I shall stand a fair chance, for, in very truth, all men are fools when it comes to this game of Love."

LOUIS E. THAYER.



IN A CLOSE PLACE

"HOW do you manage to live within your income, Briggs? Don't you feel cramped?"

"Cramped, did you say? Why, I have to go out and borrow ten dollars every time I want to stretch myself."

LE PALETOT NOISETTE

Par Louis Faran

NON-SEULEMENT Maurice et Paul étaient amis d'enfance, non-seulement ils avaient fait ensemble les mêmes études et s'étaient plus tard associés dans la même maison d'affaires, non-seulement l'année précédente ils s'étaient mariés à quelques jours de distance, épousant les deux cousines, deux ravissantes personnes, Marthe et Valentine, mais encore Maurice et Paul possédaient chacun un paletot noisette identique.

Ce jour-là, après avoir pris congé de Marthe, Maurice se dirigeait vers son bureau d'affaires, lorsqu'au détour de la première rue un commissionnaire, qui le guettait sans doute, lui remit une lettre hâtivement et disparut.

Surpris, Maurice décacheta la mystérieuse missive; une écriture grossière y avait tracé ces quelques mots:

MON VIEUX CAMARADE:

Ce soir on soupe chez moi; il y aura beaucoup de tes anciens amis; si le cœur t'en dit—tu connais l'adresse!

Ta toujours dévouée,
Rosa.

Pendant une ou deux minutes, le jeune homme resta abasourdi, se répétant ce nom qui ne lui rappelait rien; puis, tout à coup, la lumière se fit brusquement.

Rosa!

Il se souvenait bien maintenant d'une très jolie fille qu'il rencontrait autrefois dans les parties de plaisir faites avec des amis et qui avait joué un rôle dans sa vie de garçon.

D'un mouvement de colère, il fit disparaître le petit billet dans une poche de son paletot noisette et lacéra l'enveloppe en menus morceaux qu'il jeta dans le ruisseau.

Sept. 1902—129.

Avait-elle perdu l'esprit, cette Rosa, d'oser s'imaginer que lui, un homme sérieux, un homme marié—and marié avec une femme charmante—it allait encore à des soupers galants?

Et, tout en haussant les épaules, il se remit à marcher.

Rosa!

Ce nom, à lui seul, évoquait toute sa jeunesse très folle, et à certains souvenirs gais qui lui revenaient à la mémoire Maurice ne pouvait s'empêcher de sourire.

Quand il arriva enfin à son bureau, Paul s'y trouvait déjà, mais, très affairé et entouré d'ailleurs de tout leur personnel, les deux amis n'eurent pas le loisir de causer ensemble, sinon pour convenir à la hâte au théâtre où ils devaient se rendre le soir avec leurs femmes.

Paul partit le premier, et Maurice, tout en terminant son courrier quotidien, songea à l'invitation qu'il venait de recevoir.

Il sentait bien qu'il ne pouvait, qu'il ne devait l'accepter, et, pourtant, malgré lui, une curiosité avide le poussait, l'attirait.

Mais, après tout, serait-ce si criminel? Quel tort ferait-il à Marthe en assistant à ce souper? Serait-il le premier mari qui, après avoir reconduit sa femme, trouverait un prétexte plausible pour s'éloigner quelques heures? En quoi aimeraient-ils moins Marthe parce qu'il irait un instant rire avec d'anciens compagnons?

Et partagé entre sa conscience et cette tentation du fruit défendu, qui, brusquement, lui était venue, Maurice restait perplexe.

Mais, tout à coup, secouant la tête:

"Bah! n'y pensons plus; j'agirai au moment même, selon l'inspiration!"

Et se levant il prit son chapeau et son vêtement; mais en endossant son paletot noisette il éprouva dans l'entourture des manches une certaine gêne.

"Allons," pensa-t-il, "Paul se sera trompé et aura pris le mien; nous referons l'échange ce soir après le théâtre."

II

QUELQUES heures plus tard les deux jeunes couples se retrouvaient dans une première loge au Vaudeville.

La pièce, très bien jouée, était d'un intérêt captivant, et assis derrière Marthe, qui n'avait jamais été plus jolie que ce soir-là, Maurice en avait presque oublié l'invitation de Mademoiselle Rosa.

Des amis se trouvant dans la salle, lui et Paul allaient les voir pendant les entr'actes ou les recevaient dans leur loge, et la soirée s'écoula charmante.

Maurice et Marthe venaient de remonter en voiture, et la portière s'était à peine refermée sur eux, que la jeune femme, se retournant vers son mari:

"Regarde cela: n'est-ce pas indigne?" exclama-t-elle avec force en lui tenant d'une main qui tremblait le petit billet de Mademoiselle Rosa.

Maurice sentit que son cœur cessait de battre. Il voulut pousser un cri, mais n'en eut pas la force; il resta abîmé, éperdu, hébété, sans trouver un seul mot à dire.

Il avait pu, en recevant cette invitation inattendue, être pris d'un vertige de folie et admettre un instant la possibilité d'accepter; mais, maintenant, il comprenait toute l'horreur d'une telle conduite. Marthe avait vraiment le droit de le haïr ou de le mépriser. Et, dans une vision brève et atroce, il vit l'amour de cette adorable créature perdu pour lui.

"C'est affreux!" répétait Marthe avec énergie.

Il n'eut même pas l'idée de s'excuser, de se justifier. "Affreux!" murmura-t-il, machinalement, après elle, comme un écho plaintif.

Il se fit encore un instant de silence; puis, la jeune femme, se laissant aller dans le fond de la voiture:

"Pauvre Valentine!" soupira-t-elle.

Maurice sursauta.

"Valentine! Pourquoi cela?"

Marthe se redressa brusquement. "Pourquoi cela? Vous voilà bien, vous autres hommes! Son mari est en relations avec Mademoiselle Rosa, et vous dites: 'Pourquoi cela?'"

Maurice, perdu de plus en plus, se demandait s'il ne devenait pas fou.

"Paul?" s'écria-t-il malgré lui.

"Mais oui, Paul, ton ami Paul! Cela te surprend, hein? C'est au dernier entr'acte que nous avons fait cette découverte." Et, baissant un peu la voix: "C'est pendant que vous étiez sortis. Valentine, qui voulait remettre la broche de son corsage, a égratigné son doigt avec l'épingle, et comme le sang jaillissait et qu'elle avait peur de tacher son mouchoir de dentelles, elle m'a demandé de lui passer celui de son mari qui devait se trouver dans son paletot. Naturellement, je veux faire ce qu'elle me dit; je me lève, je vais à la patère où Paul avait accroché son vêtement avec la capeline de sa femme, je plonge la main dans la poche du paletot, mais au lieu du mouchoir, je n'en retire que ce chiffon de papier. Malgré moi, ces lignes écrites en gros me sautent aux yeux, et je ne puis retenir une exclamation. Là-dessus, Valentine se rapproche.

"Qu'est-ce que c'est? qu'est-ce qu'il y a?" Et elle voit à son tour le billet. C'était horrible, n'est-ce pas? pour cette pauvre femme! Tout à coup, heureusement, il m'est venu une idée, une inspiration sublime—mais jure-moi que tu ne vas pas me gronder, que tu me pardonneras."

"Quoi donc?"

"Eh bien! j'ai compris qu'un mensonge seul pouvait sauver Valentine et Paul, et j'ai menti."

"Comment?"

"Je me suis souvenue à cet instant que vous aviez tous deux le même paletot noisette, et je me suis écriée:

'Mais c'est à Maurice, cela! c'est le vêtement de Maurice!"'

"Et alors?" interrogea le jeune homme, qui ne respirait plus.

"Alors, le plus extraordinaire, c'est qu'elle l'a cru, instantanément, sans l'ombre de difficulté. C'était invraisemblable pourtant; c'était bien le paletot de Paul; il n'y avait pas à en douter. Mais les femmes sont naïves," ajouta-t-elle d'un petit air de supériorité, "et pensent toujours que ces choses-là peuvent arriver aux autres plutôt qu'à elles-mêmes!"

Maurice dissimula un sourire; alors Marthe se rapprocha de lui, et d'une voix tendre:

"Dis, tu ne m'en veux pas d'avoir menti?"

"Mais non, ma chérie. Tu as bien fait. Ce n'était pas, d'ailleurs, un si gros mensonge."

"Ce méchant Paul, crois-tu qu'il ira à ce souper?"

"Non, ma chère enfant, tranquillise-toi. Il n'ira pas, je te le jure. Qu'il en ait eu un instant la pensée, c'est possible, mais au dernier moment un homme doit sentir toute l'indignité d'un tel projet, et n'est ni assez fou ni assez lâche pour l'exécuter."

Il avait parlé avec tant de feu, de conviction, que la jeune femme, rassurée, poussa un petit soupir de soulagement.

"Alors, j'ai bien fait, et tout est pour le mieux! Il n'y a que la foi qui sauve, et c'est une bonne chose d'avoir un bandeau sur les yeux.

Cette pauvre Valentine, tout de même, si elle savait!"

"Mais elle pardonnerait, peut-être."

Marthe bondit: "Pardonner! Ah! non, par exemple! On ne pardonne pas cela!"

"Alors, si au lieu de ton amie, admettons que c'eût été toi; tu n'aurais pas pardonné?" questionna Maurice avec hésitation.

"Jamais!" répondit-elle avec une sincérité et une énergie qui firent pâlir le jeune homme.

Puis, d'un joli mouvement câlin, se blottissant tout contre lui: "Mais je sais bien que cela ne serait pas arrivé, et vois-tu, quand bien même je l'aurais vu de mes propres yeux, il me semble que je ne l'aurais pas cru."

Très ému, Maurice avait passé un bras autour de sa taille, et, se penchant vers ce joli visage qui se levait vers lui, il posa ses lèvres sur le front de la jeune femme; lorsque la voiture s'arrêta enfin devant leur porte, le baiser durait encore.

III

UN peu plus tard, comme dans un élégant déshabillé de soie rose, Marthe, assise devant sa psyché, déroulait ses longs cheveux:

"Dis donc, Maurice," conclut-elle avec un rire gai, "c'est tout de même heureux que vous ayez eu le pareil paletot noisette!"

"Oh! oui, bien heureux!" répondit le jeune homme d'un accent qui venait du cœur.



UNSETTLED AS USUAL

I THOUGHT for the Summer we'd quite settled down
Within the snug cottage we moved to in May,
But my wife feels unsettled, and so out of town
To mountain or shore she's determined to stray.
I bravely demur, but insistent is she—
What use are objections when fair woman wills?—
She has settled on going, she says, so, you see,
The whole affair's settled—excepting the bills.

R. F. G.

ON A FAN

IVORY, smooth and bright,
Covered with satin white,
Whereon in pink delight
Cupid repose—
Think of the dainty screen
Picturing such a scene!
Doesn't that surely mean
Romance and roses?

Such is Myrtilla's fan.
What could be dearer than
This to the happy man,
Who, once behind it,
In a true lover's way
Without the least delay,
Kissed her and heard her say
She didn't mind it?

That is what chanced to be
My luck one time when she
Laughingly bantered me,
Saying: "You know, sir,
Flirting is lots of fun
When with a fan 'tis done,
If you remember—one
Kiss for a blow, sir.

FELIX CARMEN.



A DANGER SIGNAL

BOBbie—Pa, is red a sign of danger?
COLONEL RUMBLOSSOM—Yes; I believe so.
"Then why don't you sign the pledge?"



DIDN'T WANT CRACKERS

THREE once was a young lady Dr.
Who owned a bad parrot that mr.
He would likewise blaspheme,
Using language extreme—
All of which, so the lady said, shr.

W. J. PRICE

WHY?

By the Baroness von Hutten

THE coffin stood by the fire-place, which was filled with expressionless, white chrysanthemums.

Through the open window came a warm, damp breeze, mingled with the smell of flowers; and the sunlight, filtering in through lace curtains, shivered in a fragile pattern across the polished floor and drew brightness out of the faded eastern rug.

He sat in a deep leather chair facing the fire-place. His face was white and bore a look of being too old for the years it had seen.

His hair, pushed back from the high, clever brow, was brown and of that silky fineness given chiefly to men with something of woman's softness in their nature.

In the coffin lay his wife.

He had loved her and once had thought that she, too, loved him. Then came The Other—a man vulgar, given to *extrait de violettes* and jeweled cravat pins; a man with thick lips, unmodeled in the corners, and long eyelashes.

But such as he was she had loved him, and for him the real nature of her had awakened; for him she had left the man she had married. She had broken her husband's heart, ruined his life, and now, after years of silent absence, had come back to him to die.

And he was wondering why she had come.

The sun faded away and rain fell gently, hushed by the tender young foliage.

He rose and stood by the coffin, looking down at her.

She was dead, gone, finished. He believed in no epilogue to the bitter comedy of Life.

"*Ita est,*" he said, aloud, smiling gently. Then he continued studying her face.

The rough curly hair, spiraling about her temples, was streaked with blue-gray. The closed eyes were a trifle sunken; but the greatest change of all was in her mouth.

It had been a fine, slight-lipped mouth, in other days, with deep-imbedded corners and a curve outward from the chin.

Now it bore a new and inscrutable smile as he looked at her.

The lips were fuller and the corners relaxed. It had become a coarse mouth. "His influence!"

Then he bent closer. "And yet it is a happier mouth than she had with me—worse, but happier."

He remembered that that other mouth had rarely smiled and never laughed.

This one—he could almost see it stretch unrestrainedly in broad merriment; he could almost see the expressive, crooked, white teeth, framed in the new curves.

He started; he seemed to hear the loud laugh.

Then the door opened, and The Other came in. "Hush!" he said, imperiously. "I've a right to come."

The husband looked at him, curiously. "I admit no right," he answered, "but I won't kick you out. And—you might tell me what your 'right' is?"

The face of The Other was coarser than it had been seven years ago.

His clothes were ill-brushed, and on one hand he wore a large diamond.

He stood in silence by the coffin for a few minutes. Then he spoke. "Yes, I'll tell you my right. I stuck to her through it all."

"You stuck to her!"

"Yes. I know what you think of me, and you are nearer right than wrong, but I did my best. It's seven years now, and she—cared for me to the end. And I loved her just as long—as she was yours. Do you see?"

"I see. Then you didn't love her?" The rain came down harder; the husband shut the window gently.

"No. And—such an affair is a drag on a man. You didn't divorce her."

"No, I didn't divorce her."

There was a long pause. Then The Other went on, harshly: "I stuck

to her, in spite of everything; and you may not believe it, but she was happy with me."

"I do believe it; I see it in her face."

"Then—I wonder why she came back to you to die? I was to come home the next day, and yet, as soon as she knew, she came to you. She couldn't stand you while she lived."

The husband smiled. "I, too, have been wondering as to that."

"Well, it's no use wondering. I'll go now. Poor Jessie!"

The husband rose. "Let us shake hands," he said. "You have not been much, but I think that, on the whole, you have been the best of the three."

They shook hands, and The Other went his way. The faces of both were grave with useless questioning.

But she in the coffin still smiled, as she had smiled before.



A WOMAN'S "NO"

SHE answered, "No." It gave me pain;
But did she mean the sweet disdain
That made her lustrous eyes more bright?
I knew, if not her chosen knight,
My love for her could never wane.

Awhile I brooded, hapless swain!
And then for solace was I fain;
Had I a rival in her sight?
She answered, "No."

Still liked I rot my love's refrain.
A thought! I'd make it fit my strain!
Again unto my heart's delight
I strove to put the question right:
"Sweet, must I always sue in vain?"
She answered, "No."

SAMUEL MINTURN PECK.



TO the bashful man all the world is one great eye.

MRS. CHISHOLM'S COMPANION

By Julie M. Lippmann

"ROBERT DUANE, New York City, New York."

The new arrival entered his name on the hotel register in a square, firm hand, and then followed the hall-boy through a labyrinth of corridors to the suite that had been assigned him. He was somewhat tired and exceedingly bored; but as these conditions had long since become chronic, they did not detain him, and he began immediate preparations for a bath and a change of clothing. This done, he sat down before a somewhat unsteady escritoire that had obviously never been designed for the use of such a long-legged individual as himself, and began a letter to his sister at home. He must tell her of his journey, uneventful as it had been. He had covered two sheets of the paper when the pen abruptly ceased its rapid, nervous travel, and he shoved back his chair with an impulse of impatience. The next instant he rose and stalked to the window in a mood of sudden exasperation. Here it was again—the old demon of ennui that he had thought he could outstrip in his race across the continent. He could endure it when it lay passive, as it sometimes did; but when it rose and confronted him with its sickening influence, life seemed to him infected and nauseating, and he turned with disgust from everything it had to offer. Yet he was fully aware that life had still a great deal to offer him. Perhaps one of the reasons for his being in his present plight was his belief, at times, that he had nothing to struggle for, nothing to aspire to, which he could not easily attain just by stretching out his hand. His for-

tune lay within his grasp and therefore it did not allure him.

The large French windows, leading from his sitting-room to the balcony outside, were open, and through them came the sound of the surf breaking ceaselessly upon the coast beyond, and the soft, clean smell of the sea and the heavy perfume of many roses. He leaned against the window-frame and looked out on the paths and parterres of the elaborate, tropical hotel-garden just beneath him; yet he scarcely saw them.

Suddenly, he became conscious that he was watching two figures below and that he was feeling a certain curiosity as to who they were and why the white-haired invalid in the heavy-wheeled chair did not employ a male servant to propel her, instead of permitting that distinguished-looking girl to do it. The white-haired invalid had a face like a death-mask; she sat stiffly upright in her chair and did not even turn her head when her companion bent over to speak to her.

"A helpless paralytic, perhaps," Duane surmised.

The companion was a noticeably beautiful girl. She was tall and nobly built, carrying her head as if it wore a crown. Her hat somewhat obscured her face from him, but he caught a glimpse of a great mass of dusky hair, the outline of a straight, short nose and the curves of a rounded cheek and chin. She was simply dressed, but her clothes were obviously well made. She walked, too, in a distinguished manner, in spite of the heavy-wheeled chair that she pushed before her. In a moment she had rolled it out of

Duane's sight, around the sweep of the veranda, toward the hotel entrance, and he found himself gazing vacantly, with a feeling of almost childish disappointment and chagrin, at the point where it had disappeared. The pair had diverted him for a moment and now they were gone. He turned back into the room, reseated himself at the unsteady little escritoire and hurriedly drew his letter to a close.

As he opened the door on his way down-stairs to the office, he heard the muffled sounds of rubber-tired wheels on the hard floor of the corridor beyond, and in another instant the invalid's chair, with its occupant and her companion, appeared around the angle of the hall and slowly made its way in his direction. He closed his door deliberately and made no haste in turning the key in the lock. By the time he had finished his very leisurely performed operations, the wheeled chair had reached him, passed on and stopped at the door of the suite next his own. He lingered a moment to attach his key to a silver ring he drew from his pocket, and then slowly retreated down the hall in the direction of the elevator.

He had ample opportunities during the evening to satisfy himself on the subject of his neighbors. He early discovered they were the objects of much gossip and a great deal of diversity of opinion. From the mass of conflicting testimony he made his own deductions.

Mrs. Chisholm was, as he had suspected, a helpless paralytic. He vaguely remembered having heard in New York that she had become an invalid from the shock she had suffered at the death of her only child, a son, who was tragically killed in a railway accident some years before. She, as the daughter of a multi-millionaire and the widow of the senior partner of the firm of Chisholm & Arnold, bankers, New York and London, was a woman of considerable means. Her husband and son were dead, and she apparently had no family ties. If any bond existed between her and her relations, it must have been singularly

weak, for it appeared that she lived alone, attended only by her companion, Beulah Brooke, the girl whom Duane had seen. No one seemed to know who Miss Brooke was or whence she came. Unmistakably, she was indispensable to her employer; she was fully in her confidence and controlled most of her affairs. It was at this point in their surmises that the gossips shook their heads and raised their eyebrows. Duane pitied the girl. Adventuress or not, it must be deeply humiliating to be made the object of such insinuations; to be ignored by the women and discussed familiarly by the men; to be treated as a mere servant in one case, or as a sordid schemer in another. Duane resolved to stand by the girl if he could and to protect her, so far as was in his power, from the slanderous tongues that were busy with her name. He admired fair play. He would give her the benefit of the doubt and believe her, until she proved otherwise, an honest woman. And if she proved otherwise—why, then there might be something he could do for her helpless victim. It somehow gave an interest to life to feel so definite an impulse. He meant to act upon it if the opportunity offered. And the opportunity did offer.

Some cigars his sister had given him before he left home proved so good that he managed, without much effort, to "hold out over Sunday," as he had said. Indeed, even the Sunday after found him still content, and many Sundays following.

In the meantime, he succeeded in the difficult task of gaining an introduction to Mrs. Chisholm. It appeared she had known his mother well in days gone by, and on this basis she accepted him as a sort of attendant squire in their strictly exclusive rambles about the grounds. He read to her, chatted with her, showed her the photographs he had taken along his route, and exerted himself, as he had not done for years, to make a fellow-creature happy. But, though he made headway with Mrs. Chisholm, he seemed never to progress an inch with her

companion. At first she appeared merely shy, reticent and unresponsive; but, as time went on and he grew in intimacy with her employer, he thought he detected a change in the girl's demeanor toward him. Her large, dark eyes regarded him with a deep look he could not fathom, and she was obviously ill at ease when he was present. By degrees it dawned on him that she was jealous of him; that she resented his popularity with Mrs. Chisholm, and that she was trying to prevent it. She put little obstructions in the way of their meeting. She gradually altered the daily programme so that when he had retired to his rooms she and her charge would slip out into the grounds, and when he strolled about outdoors they were invariably closeted within. He could not avoid realizing that all this was not accomplished without calculation. Regarded in the most lenient light, the girl was plainly not ingenuous. That much he was compelled to admit to himself; but he admitted it only after a fierce struggle. He ardently wished to believe in her. Indeed, he had come to believe that if he lost his faith in her, if he found her to be base, he must suffer as he had thought he could never suffer again; suffer as he had suffered when the girl he had loved and was going to marry proved false to him. He had utterly trusted Olive. Never a whisper of criticism had been breathed against her name. She was sheltered, idolized, secure in her position in the world and in his heart.

It had been different with Beulah Brooke. He had heard her slighted and scorned before he had exchanged a word with her. And yet—

He had loved Olive because of her innocence. Had it come to this—that he would love Beulah in spite of her guilt?

As time went on, he saw less and less of his neighbors, and, if it were a satisfaction to him to know that Mrs. Chisholm had enjoyed his companionship and only relinquished it under coercion, it was an agony to realize that this only served to prove the ex-

tent of the control her companion exercised over her.

Still, he did not leave the place. He could not. Beulah Brooke held him, through an influence as strong as it was subtle. He lingered on and on, and dared not know why.

She had asked him once if he was ever disturbed in his room by any sound from their apartment, and, though he had not thought of it before, he suddenly realized that he had never heard the faintest echo of a sound. He told her so and, while she had at once dismissed the subject as if it were of no importance, he could see that she was relieved.

One evening he retired unusually early to his own apartment, feeling particularly at odds with himself and with the world. The lights and the chatter and the violins in the drawing-room distracted him, and he was glad to escape from them to the quiet and darkness of his room, where he could dream and think and smoke at his leisure and determine for the hundredth time certainly to go "tomorrow." The sounds of music and many voices below did not penetrate to this far-away region, and he was congratulating himself on having escaped to such comforting silence and gloom, when he became conscious of an unusual circumstance that brought him to his feet in an instant. He distinctly heard the sound of a smothered cry from the room next his own—Mrs. Chisholm's room. At first he thought he must be mistaken, but after a second he knew he was not. Some one was sobbing, and an ineffectual attempt was being made to stifle the sobs. The deep, shuddering, strangling breaths were so full of tragic anguish that they drew Duane, in spite of himself, to the door that, locked and heavily draped, connected his room with the one beyond, which was only opened—the hall-boy had vouchsafed—when the two apartments were thrown into a double suite.

He hesitated an instant, not knowing what to do; but the next moment the sound of Mrs. Chisholm's voice

decided him. It was clearly audible and unmistakably hers, although the tones were strangely hoarse and muffled and interrupted by quick, painful gasps.

"You do not dare to do it! You shall not!"

The words were uttered as if in Duane's ear.

"It is a crime you are committing—a crime punishable by law. You have stolen it—taken it from me by force! How have you the heart to torture me so?—me, a poor, helpless old woman! For God's sake, do not destroy it!—for your own sake! I might die to-night and that would leave you in— How can I ever trust you again? And I loved you, loved you, loved you! And you care only for yourself and for— My peace of mind is nothing to you! I have a right to dispose of my property as I see fit. No one can prevent me. But if you destroy it—the will—and I should die to-morrow, the other will—you would be left—no one could dispute—oh, if only some one could help me! If only Mr. Duane could hear and come— Ah!"

The last word rang out almost in a shriek, for, at the mention of his name and her need of him, Duane had swept aside the curtain, set his foot against the door and prepared to burst it open by force. But there was no need of violence. At the touch of his hand it flung wide on its hinges, and he found himself across its threshold and close beside the wheeled chair and its trembling occupant. In a flash the vivid scene burnt itself indelibly upon his memory.

The white, drawn face of the paralytic, with its perfectly inscrutable expression and its two searching, gleaming eyes, into which all the life of the death-stricken body seemed to have concentrated, fixed in a sort of somnambulistic stare on the figure of Beulah Brooke, who crouched, rather than knelt, on the floor beside her. All the girl's dignity had forsaken her. Her face was blanched and set, her eyes heavy and expressionless, and with one hand she crushed a crumpled, knotted handkerchief against her lips,

while with the other she clutched a red-sealed paper to her bosom. At intervals she gave way to terrible, shuddering, voiceless sobs that shook her from head to foot. Neither of the women seemed to do more than half-see Duane, as he stood before them. Mrs. Chisholm kept her gaze fixed unwaveringly on the other's eyes, holding them as in the clutch of a vise, until Beulah Brooke, with a shivering breath and a look of unutterable protest, sank forward, her face on the floor.

Duane rushed to raise her, but fell back at the peremptory command of Mrs. Chisholm.

"Not yet! Not yet! Wait a moment more. So! Now lift her up! Be gentle with her! The sofa there! That will do. Thank you. Generally she has to lie as she falls, poor child, until I wake her. Don't look at her so—she doesn't deserve it. And, good God, man, don't suffer like that! I thought you loved her, but never like this. If I had known you loved her like this— Don't pity me! It's all right now—now that you have come. I'll explain—just sit down next me, so; your back to her. No one must overhear. Don't fret about her; she will sleep until I wake her. It will do her good. Nearer, please. I can only whisper.

"You see what I am—a helpless woman, my body half-dead. I was left all alone, widowed, childless. None of my people came to comfort me—not one of my own blood—when Donald died and I became—like this. They made excuses, the politest excuses, but they would not stay with me. And yet they intend to claim my property, when I die, as my 'natural heirs.' Natural! At first I thought they would not have long to wait. I hoped it would be so. I longed to die. I was—so lonely. Then she—Beulah—came. She came to tell me about Donald. She had been in the train at the time of the accident. She was with him to the end; so brave, so uncomplaining! She had been injured, too, but she

gave no sign; she just bore her hurt and helped to rescue the others. Don't think *she* ever told me that. My lawyers heard it from others who were there. I pleaded with her to stay with me. I knew it was selfish—it's death in life for her—but I was so comfortless and—and—one can accept such sacrifices from Beulah. She waits upon me hand and foot; she never sleeps, I think. Whenever I need her, night or day, she is at my side and—I always need her. She lifts me—carries me; I am in her heart as well as in her arms. She does it all. I suppose I might have a servant to do the heaviest work, but I'm selfish and fastidious; I hate a servant's touch, and so—Beulah spares me. Sometimes she overexerts herself, and then I have to make her rest—she would never do it unless she were compelled. I'm physically helpless, as you see. There was only one way for me to control her. It's shameful, I know, but I can't help it. I have to use the only power that's left me—my mind over hers. At first it was fearfully difficult—she rebelled so; but now I can do it quite easily. Only, to-night it was hard, she was so determined! She never knew, until we came here, what people were saying about her—that she exerted undue influence over me—that she was scheming for my property. Poor child! But, at last, she discovered it, and—it almost killed her. I made her confess what it was that was troubling her; she did not wish to tell. But she promised not to leave me, for all the slander. Then you came, and she—she grew to love you. God forgive me for telling you what she tried so hard to conceal, even from me. And, when she could not endure the pain of meeting you, because she felt you must despise her so for what the gossips said, I had in pity to consent to let her spare herself what suffering she could by avoiding you. She discovered here that I had made a will leaving it all—the property—to her, and she pleaded and pleaded with me to alter it. She said it would be a

curse to her—no one would ever believe in her again. She said it would be theft—that it belonged by right to my people. Ha! my people, who have been so good to me! She begged me to listen to her, but I—I know what her life was when she was penniless. Oh, she suffered—she suffered! Poverty like that means hardship and misery and insult and wretchedness! I could not bear it—to think of Beulah, my girl, suffering so again after what she has been to me! I knew she meant to destroy the will if she could, poor lamb! She is as innocent as a child and as transparent as crystal. I saw what was in her mind, and I was afraid she might succeed. So I arranged to give her to-night what would seem to be her chance. She never dreamed it was a plot. I bribed a maid to unlock that door—detestable, I know; but I did it. I was desperate. I made her turn the key and then the knob, and she set the door ajar just as I bade her. I did it so you could hear. And then, when I knew you had come up, I had Beulah bring me my papers, and I pretended not to notice that the will was there, and let her snatch it, and then she would have destroyed it, but I held her back with my eyes and I talked—talked—oh, hideously loud, so that you could hear. She would never have let you know the truth—not if she had died. I know her—so sensitive, so proud! I have been selfish, I know, to let her wear her young life out serving me; but I'm not all bad; I determined you should know the truth and—her—they're both the same—and now you do. Swear to me you love her, Robert Duane! Swear to me you'll try to be worthy of her! Great heavens, man, don't cry like that! It—it breaks a woman's heart to see a man cry. There, let me kiss you, boy! I have no son, and you, no mother. Now, wait a moment—I'll wake her—softly, oh, softly! Beulah! Beulah! Love, look up! That's right, my dear! There, Robert, take her on the balcony. The night air is so sweet—and you will be alone!"

FORTUNE SMILES

HE loves me; he loves me not!"
 Ah, curious little maid,
 She knows full well my love, and yet
 The truth she hath essayed
 To tear from out this tiny flower,
 And as the petals fall
 She chants the tune, "He loves me much;
 He loves me not at all."

"He loves me; he loves me not!"
 The petals fast grow few.
 Alas! the thing is going wrong;
 What will the maiden do?
 She slyly steals a glance my way,
 Two leaves as one take flight;
 She murmurs, "Ah, he loves me much;
 I'm glad it came out right!"

TRUMAN ROBERTS ANDREWS.



MAKING HIMSELF CLEAR

SHE—Do you know that lady in the far corner?
HE—In a way; I have a listening acquaintance with her.
 "I don't believe I understand you, sir."
 "She is my wife."



A HARD FIGHT

SHE—Did your friend marry the widow?
HE—No; but his untiring perseverance is all that saved him.



EXTREMELY DISTANT

RANDOLPH—He is a distant relative of mine.
SHE—How distant?
 "Oh, about \$150,000 removed."

IN THE BACHELOR'S GARDEN

By Temple Bailey

"**T**HE cottage is taken," said Jane.

The Bachelor laid down his spoon and pushed back his strawberries. "Any women?"

"A girl," said Jane, tersely.

The Bachelor groaned and picked up his paper.

Then there was silence, while Jane poured the coffee and rang for muffins and sweetbreads.

"You needn't know her," said Jane, after a while.

The Bachelor peered abstractedly through his glasses. "Her? Oh, the girl!" he remarked, finally.

Jane nodded, and, having finished breakfast, he gathered up his letters, and went and stood by the open window from which the latticed blinds were thrown back. The rusty-breasted robins were hopping about the dewy lawn, and the crab-apple trees were a splash of pink in the orchard beyond. The smell of the sweet Spring air awoke something within him.

"Is she pretty, Jane?" he said, hesitatingly.

Jane was carrying the tray out of the door, but she turned and looked at him searchingly, down the length of the dim room.

"She's young," she said, "and yellow-haired, and she has a little brother and she keeps a cat." After this information, the old housekeeper went out and slammed the door.

"H'm," mused the Bachelor, thoughtfully, when he was left alone.

Then he stepped through the window and into his garden. The long, narrow beds that bordered the paths were gay with tulips and jonquils; an

almond-bush drooped its slender pink branches over the tender green of the grass; from the leafless branches of the wistaria-vine on the garden wall hung delicate purplish clusters of blossoms, which mingled their fragrance with that of the lilacs by the gate. There was a cat-bird in the hedge and a flock of small brown sparrows twittered among the snowy-white blossoms of the cherry-trees, and the wrens were building in the eaves of the Summer-house.

The Bachelor knelt by the side of a rose-bush, picked up the trowel he had dropped when called in to breakfast, and began to turn up the rich earth around the roots of the bush.

Suddenly, the peace of the garden was broken. The happy chatter of the birds ceased and they uttered restless, frightened cries. The Bachelor stopped humming a tuneless and idiotic little song and rose from his knees, dropping his eye-glasses that he might get a better view at long range.

Under the cherry-tree was the cause of the uproar. A magnificent white cat crouched on the ground and widened her green eyes evilly, and whipped her tail back and forth as the birds circled above and around her, just out of reach.

The Bachelor took a step forward, and she bounded away; but he was too quick for her, and caught her up in his arms and looked into her green eyes.

"No cats allowed, pussy cat," he said, emphatically. Then, holding her under one arm, while she struggled violently, he placed a ladder against

the garden wall, amid the wistaria, and climbed to the top round. In spite of her clawing and scratching, he held her for a moment in his strong arms and stroked her fur. "No cats and no girls, pussy cat," he said, and sighed.

In the sigh was the renunciation of a man dominated by the memory of a youthful experience. The Bachelor had loved once, but the girl had married another man. When he met her he wondered that such an insignificant being could have spoiled his faith in women, but in all these years there had been no girl in the garden.

As for cats, Jane objected to cats; and his old housekeeper's prejudice, together with a certain consideration for the birds, had made the rule secure.

He rubbed the cat under her chin, thoughtfully, seriously, and, with a sudden change of tactics, she curled up against his arm and gave a long, purring mew, and tucked her soft white head close against his neck. The action had in it all the seductiveness of sudden, caressing surrender. The Bachelor liked it and wished more of it, but he had long ago learned to close his heart to feminine blandishments; so he took her up carefully by the back of the neck and dropped her over the garden wall. She landed safely on the soft grass, and he looked over after her.

"You are very nice, pussy cat," he said; "but you are not for my garden."

The cat bounded across the road, and as she did so the door of the cottage opposite opened. There came out of the door a girl—a goddess, the Bachelor called her—in a muslin gown. She was straight and slender, and she was very, very young. All at once, looking at her from the top of the little ladder, the Bachelor felt a pang for his lost youth.

"Pussy cat, pussy cat, where have you been?" she questioned, severely, and flashed an inquiring glance at the Bachelor, whose trim, dark head and intellectual eye-glasses were all that showed above the wall.

But the Bachelor was looking down

confusedly on the fine white parting that separated the burnished golden waves of her hair.

"She frightened the birds," he said, helplessly, and disappeared.

For the next half-hour he dug distractedly in the earth and spoiled most of his precious rose-bushes, for his head was filled with visions of the goddess with the burnished hair.

Suddenly, he straightened up and laughed, and with the laugh he was transformed. He strode up the path with the swagger of a happy boy. His quiet, scholarly walk was discarded. What man could be old with a face like that in his heart?

It was fate. That morning something had said to him, "She is coming!" and now she had come into his life—his lonely, lonely life.

Up in the Bachelor's den was a little window that overlooked the cottage. This window became a shrine. He could see the girl and the boy and the white cat, and they were all of them very gay and very happy and very young, and the Bachelor, keeping wistful watch of them, felt like an elderly Peri.

He knew that he was spying on the goddess, but he, who had always been the soul of honor, gloried in his fall. When the goddess came to the door it was an event; when she poured coffee in the dining-room of the cottage it was an epoch; when she walked in the garden it was history.

He drove Jane nearly distracted by the mystery of his actions. When before had he neglected the precious garden?

"Your lilies-of-the-valley are coming out," she said one morning, reproachfully.

In the quiet days before the coming of the goddess, the lily bed had been the pride of the Bachelor's heart. His conscience smote him and he went out to the secluded corner where the little white bells nestled in the sheathlike leaves.

"She is like them, she is like them," he whispered, and brooded over their beauty.

Up to this time he had been content to worship afar off, but now he resolved to meet her and know her, and when the Bachelor wished anything he went systematically to work to get it.

Knowing that the boy went fishing in the early morning, the Bachelor also went fishing in the early morning.

They met at a turn of the stream. The boy was on one bank and the Bachelor on the other.

"Any luck?" said the Bachelor, in a hushed voice that seemed to fit in with the shadows and the silence of the woods.

The boy looked at the Bachelor's well-filled creel and then at his own empty one.

"I never have any luck," he said.

"H'm," said the Bachelor, and he dropped his eye-glasses and gave the boy a long look from his clear brown eyes. Such a depressing youngster, and the goddess had to live with him! Then the Bachelor sat down on a stone.

"A fisherman, my dear fellow," he said, "must have patience. I can wait forever for anything I want and mean to have." And he thought of the girl.

But the boy thought only of himself. "I won't be patient," he flared.

"H'm," said the Bachelor again, and he turned his glasses absently around in his fingers, so that they flashed sun-spots over the boy's chestnut head.

They walked along the opposite banks of the stream, sometimes in silence, and sometimes the boy talked. He was a pessimistic youngster. Ill health had broken into his school year, and had brought him and his sister to this quiet place.

While the boy talked the Bachelor pondered on plans for a continuance of the acquaintance he had begun. "Do you ride?" he asked, as they tramped homeward.

The boy's face brightened. "Yes," he said; "but we haven't any horses."

"Come over in the morning and have a run with me," the Bachelor said, and the boy accepted.

Before they reached home the fish all went into the boy's creel, and he was joyously hospitable.

"Come in, and we'll have them for breakfast."

The Bachelor concealed his indecorous exultation and went.

Then the boy, without ceremony, led him through the back gate of the cottage and they passed the kitchen window, and there was the goddess making biscuit for breakfast!

She was rolling the dough and her arms were bared to the elbow, showing childish dimples. She had on a pink gown and a white apron, and the Bachelor was enthralled to the point of speechlessness. The white cat sat on the sill and blinked at the Bachelor.

"Do you like them?" said the goddess, meaning the biscuit.

"I love them," said the Bachelor, meaning the dimples.

When she came into the dining-room later, she was without the apron and her sleeves were down. An old colored woman passed the trout and the biscuits, and the girl poured coffee; but the Bachelor feasted on ambrosia and drank nectar.

Life from this time became strange and unreal to the Bachelor. Gone were the days when his books and his flowers were his companions. In the daytime he cultivated the society of the boy, and in the evening he was permitted to walk and talk with the goddess.

Sometimes he met a pink-cheeked, athletic young man, and at others a dark and slender foreigner. On such evenings he would go home and sit in some dark corner of his garden and meditate murder.

But there were other days when no one came, and she was very kind. Little by little he was permitted to see the woman behind the goddess, and he loved her the more because of her humanity.

So it came about that one evening the Bachelor came down-stairs with a rose in his buttonhole and a bunch of lilies-of-the-valley in his hand.

Jane eyed him disapprovingly.

"You are old," she grumbled, with the freedom of long service, "to be so gay."

The Bachelor kissed her on her withered cheek. "I am not old!" he cried.

"You are forty-five your next birthday," said Jane, unpeased.

For a moment the light went out of the bachelor's face; then he looked at the lilies and laughed and ran down the steps like a boy.

"Oh, Jane, Jane, you are mistaken," he repeated, gaily; "I am just twenty."

Later, when it was dark, he came home, with the faded lilies still in his hand. He had fingered his glasses nervously when he asked the question of questions, and when she said "No," in her cool, confident little way, his hands had gone out desperately toward the lilies, which lay between them, and he had clutched them as if for help.

"I know," he had said, "I—I am too old." And she had been mute.

He crept up to his den and dropped the lilies on the desk and his arms across the lilies and his head on his arms, and the shadows gathered deeper and deeper, until the room was black.

After this he turned again to his garden. "We must live without her," he said, and he talked with Jane about bulbs and other dry and commonplace things.

But sometimes, in the evening, when his pulses stirred, he would go up-stairs in the gloom to the little window and watch her, as she played rippling tunes to the boy or threw tissue-paper balls for the white cat to catch.

Then he would finger the gray hair on his temples and his voice would break. "Such a fool to think of it!" he would whisper; "such an old, old fool!" With a gesture of despair he would draw the curtains to shut out the merry, laughing group and light his lamp and gaze unseeing at the yellow pages of his old, old books.

Therefore it came about that he did not see the girl, after the boy had gone to bed, as she stood by the little gate and looked wistfully over toward the big, dark house. Only the white cat knew, and she preserved a sphinx-like

silence when she was hugged close in round, white arms, while tears, falling fast, made spots on her immaculate fur.

"He doesn't seem so very, very old, pussy cat," her mistress would moan. "I wonder—" And then her sentences would trail off into indistinguishable murmurs, while the cat purred peacefully as she licked her wet fur smooth again.

As the Bachelor went no more to the cottage, the boy came to him. The white cat, too, came, timidly at first, and finally with the boldness of assured welcome. But the girl never came.

The boy sat on a bench and delivered dogmatic opinions, as is the way with the young, while the Bachelor worked and listened.

One morning, however, the boy was restless; evidently something was on his mind.

"Why don't you come over?" he asked, suddenly.

The Bachelor looked down at him from the top of the ladder, where he was training the wistaria.

"Oh, because—" He paused.

"That's what Felicia said," remarked the boy, and stuck his hands in his pockets and lifted a red face to the Bachelor.

There was dead silence as the Bachelor raised a heavy branch and laid it in place.

"She said something else," went on the boy, awkwardly.

The Bachelor dropped the branch and came down the ladder and stood in front of the boy.

"What did she say?" he demanded.

The boy dug his heels into the gravel. "Well, I asked her to come in here with me, and she said, 'No, no; I am shut out; I have shut myself out forever!' and—"

The Bachelor put both of his hands on the boy's shoulders and gave him a little shake. "Did she say that—did she?"

His voice was deep with emotion, and he threw his head back and squared his shoulders. The youngster

looked at him with sudden embarrassed understanding.

"Oh, I say," he advised, with confused blushes, "try again. She doesn't know her own mind; no girl does."

The Bachelor wrung the boy's hand, and then that red-faced and bullet-headed angel departed.

But, when the boy had gone, the Bachelor's face darkened. His doubts returned, and he sat in his lonely corner with only the lilies for company. The white cat crept through the half-opened gate, unrebuffed, and, as the birds were all asleep, she came and sat by the Bachelor's side and tucked her pretty head under his hand.

And this time he did not turn her away. "Oh, pussy cat, pussy cat," he said, "will she ever come into my garden?"

They sat there for a long time, the man and the cat, and the moon came up and showed the garden glorified with the whiteness of the light. There were silver flowers in it, with a gold one now and then, and the branches of the almond-bush made dark shadows on the lawn.

Then, outside of the gate, he heard a voice calling.

"Pussy! pussy cat!" cried the voice. The Bachelor rose and went to the

gate and pushed it open wide. The girl stood without, and he took her hand and drew her beyond the honeysuckle-wreathed portals.

"She is here," he said, "but you must come in and get her."

Thus the girl came into the garden, and now that the Bachelor had her on enchanted ground he was not afraid.

So, suddenly brave, he went and picked a big red rose, and, leaning over her, he fastened it in her hair—the burnished hair of the goddess. Then his two hands went to each side of the oval of her face and he turned it up to his.

"You belong to my garden, you flower of all the flowers," he said; "I will not let you go."

As she looked at him, wonderingly, all his courage deserted him; for who dares command a goddess? And he went and leaned against the cherry-tree with his face in his hands.

But the garden pleaded for him. All the blossoms that he had loved and cared for contributed their share to the enchantment. As in a dream, her hands touched his and drew them away from his face; and, as he looked into her eyes, all at once he knew that he was really very, very young, and that his garden was the garden of paradise.



LIFE AND I

AS the shadows glide
Over the wheat on the ripe hillside,
So we journey, Life and I;
O sweet youth-time, go not by!

Where the warm winds meet,
To the wreathèd pipe we time our feet;
So we journey, Life and I;
O sweet youth-time, go not by!

Where the grasses play,
Singing, we wander away and away;
Lovers ever, Life and I;
O sweet youth-time, go not by!

JOHN VANCE CHENEY.

Sept. 1902

THE SEARCH

OH, the weary way I went
 Up and down the city,
 Seeking for my Heart's Content,
 (Eh, my sweet, my pretty!)
 Townfolk from their casements bent,
 Smiled in mirth or pity,
 Nowhere was my Heart's Content
 Up or down the city.

Oh, the weary way I went
 Through the country places,
 Peering for my Heart's Content
 Through the greenwood's laces;
 Swain and maiden laughed and leant,
 Mocking in their faces;
 Nowhere was my Heart's Content
 Through the country places.

Through the Land o' Dreams I went.
 Lo! one called me sweetly.
 Through the dusk my Heart's Content
 Star-like rose to meet me.
 Here in No-man's Continent
 Folk nor flout nor cheat me,
 Here alone my Heart's Content
 Thrills and stills to greet me.

MCCREA PICKERING.



A SURE ENOUGH SECRET

SHE—There is one secret a woman can keep.
HE—Absurd! What is it?
 “I can't tell you; it's a secret.”



GOING HER ONE BETTER

CORA—The idea! Jack couldn't get me if he wanted me.
LENA—He couldn't get me even if he didn't want me,

THE MEASURE OF LIFE

By Carlton T. Chapman

"**G**OOD MORNING, Edith." "Why, Lucy, how do you do! How glad I am to see you! Where have you been?"

"Why, where do you suppose?—the most interesting trip!—to one of the camps at Chickamauga. Papa was there, you know, when they had a battle once, in our war. He was a captain then, and wanted to see how the place would look with all these new soldiers there—the North and South together, he said, camping on the same field. It pleased him so much I couldn't help enjoying it, though it was awfully hot and dusty. I thought I never could get clean again. They were very nice to us. Papa seemed to know all the generals and big men like that, and they shook hands, laughed and almost cried sometimes over their stories, and one old man—just a dear!—with a little, clean-white beard, and stars on his collar, but not much else to show he was an officer, just hugged papa and said he'd saved his life once when they were fighting, against each other, too. Well, I assure you, it was quite funny to see those old fellows talking and laughing and crying together; and, when the bugles blew and soldiers came marching by, they all stood up and saluted, and papa wished he was marching again, too. Sometimes he thought he was, I guess. He would step up and down till I'd have to speak to him, and then—poor old papa!—there'd be tears in his eyes; and once, when the band played 'Marching through Georgia', he commenced singing it, and they all joined in, hundreds of them, until it did sound grand.

Every one seemed to know it, and shouted it out—hurrahed and hurrahed, till I got quite excited myself, and had my hat tipped far over my eyes, when I remembered again; and along came that handsome Jack Carter and Tom Drake. They must have thought I was losing my senses, standing around there with those old men, all hot and excited. They looked quite fine with their new uniforms and lots more important than the one they said was a general. Papa would hardly speak to them, he was so interested in the old men and the singing. He was crying when they got through, and said: 'Thank God, Jack, we have lived to see the time we can sing that battle hymn together, you and I, and our sons of the North and South, marching side by side under the same old flag. I never thought I should live to see the day.' 'Nor I,' said the old general, crying, too, and they both shook hands till I thought they never would get through, and I must say I felt quite excited myself, and didn't seem to mind if my hat wasn't on straight, though when I got back to the house I was a fright.

"Oh, of course, I asked for Bob the first thing. You know that I always liked poor old Bob, with his enthusiasm and his hobbies. His regiment had gone to Tampa."

"Oh, it had! How did you know?" said Edith.

"Why, it was in all the papers, and all about leaving his swell company here that wouldn't go to war."

"Well, I don't read the papers much, and never war-talk. It doesn't

interest me; I don't care anything about it. These tin soldiers of ours, they don't compare with the regiments I've seen in Europe; they *do* look like soldiers. At Fontainebleau! What a good time we had there, with the little lieutenant of Chasseurs; he was quite a nice boy!"

"Was that where you met the count?"

"Yes, he was a captain then. They were going to have a fight, those two, but I stopped it and went away soon after, and then the count came over here, and Bob got mad about it."

"I should think he would."

"Now, Lucy, it's just for amusement—you know that. The count's charming. He has such funny little ways! and he's useful, too. He sings and recites so prettily! Why, all the women have tried to get him away from me—all but you, Lucy. I must say you don't seem to like him, and I wonder, too. Don't you think he's handsome?"

"Perhaps, for that style of a man; but I don't like the style."

"Well, he's very nice, *petit* Maurice. I am really getting very fond of him. I should quite miss him."

"I suppose you miss Bob?"

"Yes, of course, I do. Bob's so big, and always made so much noise, and was always smoking all over the house. It's a kind of relief to have him gone."

"Doesn't the count smoke?"

"Cigarettes; that's all. I, too, smoke them sometimes. They have his name on them and his crest."

"What is his crest?"

"Oh, I don't know! It's quite simple, but he says it's one of the oldest in France. Maurice never makes any noise, and he always laughs, and is so obliging and considerate!"

"Yes, I suppose so," said Lucy, wearily. "They always are, for a time."

"Bob couldn't abide the count. But he need not have shown it so much; and as for going to the war, that's his own fault. I didn't wish

him to. I had planned to go to France this Summer. We had so many pleasant invitations, through the count's friends."

"But they say Americans are not popular over there this year."

"Oh, nonsense! The spread-eagle sort never are. It's quite different with me."

"Why so, Edith? I suppose you talk and act like a Frenchwoman!"

"Well, I try to. I have been in France so much, I fancy I can play the part."

"Yes, with the count to help you, I fancy you can. Well, I must leave, Edith. I have to go to a meeting this afternoon at Aunt Lu's. They're organizing a relief-association for the soldiers. They say there will be lots of them sick before the Summer's over. What do you hear from Bob?"

"Oh, he says he's getting used to it down there, with the thermometer at ninety-six degrees. The flies, mosquitos and the dust, he says, are exasperating. Says he's in the saddle at half-past five every morning, and they work and drill nearly all day. Sounds very stupid to me. But he was always funny. I can't understand how a man in his position, who has always had everything in the way of comfort and luxury, can stand that sort of life, all for a silly notion about his duty. One reason why he doesn't like Europe is because he can't have his bath or his linen as nice as he likes them, and now he's turned himself into a regular mule-driver, and I suppose is hot and horrid."

"Poor Bob!"

"Why, Lucy, you worry about him more than I do."

"Well, I wonder you don't worry more. If I had a husband as nice as he is, I should worry about him a lot. I should go there to see him and cheer him up."

"Go down there at this season? Mercy! I never could stand it. It's hot enough here; there's no place to live there, either."

"Well, that would not make any difference to me; but, as it happens, there is a big hotel."

"Oh, so there is; the Clarks told me about it. They were down there during the Winter. Well, I know I couldn't stand it. We are going to Newport soon. It will be dull, too, this season. This horrid war has spoiled everything."

"Yes, it has changed things a great deal. We shall stay in town quite late, I fear; papa is so interested!"

"What! if the Spanish fleet should come?"

"You needn't worry about that. I've a cousin on the *Columbia* who says he only wishes they would. Besides, they'd more than likely visit Newport, also."

"Oh, that would be truly exciting. I almost wish they would. They have such pretty names, so long and important—quite different from plain American ones."

"Well, there may be just as good or better men, if only called John Smith. That count has turned your head, Edith, I do believe. But I must go. Give my love to Bob when you write."

"Why don't you write him yourself, Lucy? He'd be glad to hear from you, for I don't write him very long letters. I always hate to write letters, at least in English. French is so much prettier; but Bob can't read it, or won't."

"Good-bye, dear; so sweet of you to make me such a nice visit in the morning!"

"I suppose you'll be at Mrs. Jones's for luncheon to-morrow."

"No."

"Oh, you'd better; there will be a merry party."

"Well, *au revoir.*"

II

THE heat in the long grass of the valley was simply stifling. Waves of vapor had risen with the morning sun, and now the shafts of light burned through the still air, touching the parched men like hot needles. Flies and vermin stung them as they lay there on the moist, tropic earth, brushing at the pests, turning about to be

more comfortable, cursing the heat, the delay, or grumbling in good-tempered impatience at the folly that had brought them thus far, to lie in the grass and be shot at by invisible foes.

Along the mud-path called a road, through pools of water and the ruts of heavy-wheeled artillery or transport wagons, cluttered with mule teams, boxes and bales of camp-equipage scattered along the route, jammed with men, horses, mules, wagons—somehow they had marched, and were, at last, in sight of the hill where the fort was.

On the right, since early morning, the artillery had been booming—Capron's battery. Toward El Caney heavy firing had been going on, also for hours, it seemed. A thin gray pall of smoke rose over the valley; and above the white line of the town, just showing in places through the green foliage, a yellowish vapor hung.

The rattle of musketry had been incessant, rising at times to a swirling, feverish roar of sound, sinking again to a dull but continuous rattle. The sharp snap and bark of the artillery sounded, now and again, above it. How maddening to lie here and listen, with no part in it! Toward the shore, over the abrupt coast hills, came the deep-toned thunder of rifled guns from the ships. They, also, were at the quarry.

Oh, for a chance to move on! Company after company continued to cross the little river, wading through the water, some stopping to drink. "Get on, there!" yelled the officers; "don't drink that water!"

It was filling with dead horses and men, too. The enemy had got the range of the ford, and there the bullets flew fast. A dozen men fell. Horses neighed in terror, balking from the deadly opening. Lashed by the driver's whip, they snorted and dashed across. Under the shadow of the trees they felt safe; but the bullets found them there—the far-seeking, singing Mauser, clipping the leaves and branches from the foliage, snipping the grass, peep-peeping through the air.

"What in hell are we left here for?" groaned an officer, as he caught a burly man, who had leaped up and then had fallen into the officer's arms, dead. Tenderly he laid the soldier on the ground, and the blood soaked into it.

"Too late," he said to an ambulance man; "he's a goner."

Lying in the grass, a trooper of cavalry smoked his pipe, resting on his back.

"Haven't got another pinch, have ye, pard?" said a comrade.

"Nope; got a cigarette though. Here, catch it; don't get up."

"Damn it!" the trooper exclaimed, as, taking his pipe from his mouth, a bullet caught it from his hand. "Gee!" he added, "close call for my trigger finger. Wonder if I could get a shot at some of them beggars." And suiting the action to the word, he began crawling through the tangled, tough-fibred grass. A dozen other men followed him.

"Keep quiet, there," called an officer.

"Let 'em be," said another; "just as safe there as here."

"Wonder how long this is going to last? Don't believe anybody's shooting at those Spaniards; they seem to be very brash."

Some of the troopers were firing now. The flash of their short guns seemed to comfort them. They crawled further on, up the hill. Soon others followed. The whole line began to wriggle through the dirt and brambles.

"Here, what are you kicking me for?" said a trooper, facing about.

"I'm not touching you," said the next man. But a moment later he cried: "Why, you're shot! your back's all blood!"

"The hell I am! Feels as if I had been struck in the back."

Several officers were walking about now, keeping track of their men; others stood up. The men began to rise to their feet along the line.

There must have been an order given to advance. What a din the guns made! They were cracking all about.

The men began to cheer and shout. "Hurrah, now for them!"

They began to run, stumbling and falling, some of them, but getting up again and advancing in squads and groups. Soon the hill was black with them; but they fell fast. The air was alive with the whining messages of death. "Forward, charge!" the bugle sounded at last; then the advance was rapid. There was no more doubt. The fire from the hilltop flashed continuously. It was hot, desperate work.

"Hurrah!" they yelled, and pushed on. A strapping darkey of the Tenth was singing, "For I want you, ma honey, yaas, I do." Between his lips was a half-burned cigarette. Suddenly he pitched forward on his face and then rolled over.

"Reckon you have no further use for that cigarette, honey," said another Tenth man, appropriating the same, "an' I'll tell 'em about you, fore Gawd."

"Forward!" was the order that now ran along the line.

"Look out for the barbed wire!"

Barbed wire! line after line of it! A dozen men were caught struggling in it. But the advance did not stop. Over it, through it, cutting and tearing with hands, knives or wire-cutters, they got past. Men were down and up again, or down forever. Firing and shouting, they swept up the hill, irresistible, indomitable.

Leading his men, crouching through the grass with them, jumping up and running ahead, calling them on, up the hill went Captain Bob Yorke, burned in the southern sun, a young beard growing on his hot face, dirty with the service, like his men, loved by them—cheering, urging, his eyes flashing with excitement, erect now and sword in hand, facing death with no thought but proud elation.

It was worth a hundred years of dull city life, he thought, thus to be a man with other men; to face death; perchance, to purge himself in this sacrifice of all the selfishness of his past life. Yes, he was glad of the chance. The world, the great city, the thousand interests of life faded away in

the dim past. Here and now he lived, proving his manhood; here and now he would die. He did not sorrow for the wife behind him. He thought of her as she had been, with a wave of tender love—and then, alas! as she had become, indifferent, selfish, wrapped up in the silly world he despised with all his big, manly heart. She might even be relieved, might be glad; would mourn him properly, and then marry the count—that simpering humbug, that imbecile! At the thought he burst into such a howl of rage and agony that the men about him quickened their steps involuntarily, and wondered what had struck the captain—perhaps a bullet.

Fast in the pathway, tugging and struggling with his bare hands in impatient rage at sight of his comrades passing him, was a negro soldier in a web of barbed wire. The more he struggled, the more entangled he became. The bullets flew about him; his hat went off; blood trickled down his face.

"'Fore de Lord, won't none o' you folks help dis nigger?" he groaned.

"Sit down, you fool, and keep quiet. We ain't no time for you now."

The first line of attack was all that they thought of then. On! on! Help comrades afterward.

"Oh, Lord!" cried the negro, his eyes sticking out with wrath, fear and disappointment, as he saw his comrades sweep by him.

"Here, what's the matter with you?" called Captain Bob. "That's no way; keep cool, now, and I'll cut you out."

"Thank de Lord! Bless you, captain!" and the soldier put his hands to his head, wiping away the blood, which, warm and sticky, wet his fingers. He looked at the red stain with dull wonder.

"Thank you, captain. Didn't like to get stuck here and let all the other boys get ahead of me."

"Go on, boys!" yelled the captain to his men.

"Come out of that, you fools! Bob, come on, you're only a target there."

"Here, now! Jump, put your feet on the wires! Now come on!"

A hundred Mausers were pointed at the little group struggling there full three minutes. It seemed an hour.

"My God, sir, you're hit!" exclaimed the trooper, as the captain gave a gasp and fell into the mass of rusty, torturing wire.

Picking him up and putting him on his broad back, the negro grasped his arms and, holding him, ran slantwise across the field to a clump of trees. The men gave way for them; they were running now, hardly stopping to shoot; some were almost at the top of the hill. There was a fury of whining sounds in the air, the roar and rattle of the guns were continuous. But a deep hum of voices sounded above it all—the fierce battle-cry of the North men. The voice that rose above the guns in Chickamauga's woods, the wild battle-song of Gettysburg, the same strong voice called it out now. It rose with resistless volume above the sound of the guns; it echoed through the woods and back from the hills, like the ghost of some great spirit mounting in wild cadence above the storm of battle. On it swept, lifting the hearts of men in that fierce advance, bringing terror and dismay to the men in the trenches. Had they ever heard that wild cry before? They paused to listen, and then the brown, panting line swept over them. They looked in the eyes, they felt the hot breath of the devils who had charged a mile up the hill, without cover and unsupported, and stopped not for the rain of death from the rapid-firing guns. Was ever such a thing before? Could it be possible?

Again the terrible battle-yell rose above the din, and the brown line stayed not in the trenches, rose over and into them, and the enemy fled in wild flight—back to their batteries.

III

THE eyes of night looked down on the scene. Soft starlight fell from the velvety blackness of the sky.

Above them the encircling mountains

rose gloomy and dark, hiding their mystery in pathless wood or impassable crag.

In the trenches rested the army, wet, cold and tired, but triumphant. What heed if the trampled ground was but mud and water? They had won it. What heed of the tangled grass, the dripping trees, awesome and spectral in the somber shadows? What heed of the dead and the wounded; of the city beyond and the dreaded guns of the ships in the harbor? For the morrow, what heed? Let it come! They had taken the hill, they would hold it, too; but let the leaders remember that men must sleep.

Sleep was not for many that weary night. Back on the road to Siboney, through the mud and the darkness, wading, stumbling, staggering on, through the clinging bushes and deep blackness of the trees, moved a grim procession of men, wounded and strong, the quick and the dead. Back to the hospital tents, not yet ready for them; back to where the ships might help on the morrow, for on the morrow who knew what might follow? There was no place at the front for the injured and the helpless.

All night long thin lines of men straggled along the way to the front, sleepy and weary, carrying their guns as they pleased. They turned out for the rumbling wagons, jolting back. Wounded? Of course, many of them!

At the front the surgeons had done their best, tying up wounds, patching and pulling men together; placing on them yards of white bandage in lieu of shirts, a brass tag with name, company and regiment in case one should fall by the way; for all were alike that night, all equally dirty, blackened and muddy—officers and privates; there was no difference then.

"Back you go; you that have legs must walk. Move on; we don't want you here. Hurry, before the sun's up; the heat may kill you."

Such were the orders. Men with broken heads or arms, or shot through the chest, must walk if they could, and most of them did. In the jolt-

ing wagons were many who could not, and so they were carried; racked and bumped, to be sure, but carried back to Siboney.

Lanterns waved dull yellow flickers of light along the path; men asked for friends, and leaned against one another for support, toiled slowly on, and pitied the poor fellows who were unable to walk. Drivers cursed the stubborn mule teams, grumbled, complained, but managed to get on with their freight, though sometimes they blocked the way as the wheels were caught in branches or ruts of the road. But, at sun-up, even before that hour, the procession moved down the steep, winding way into the village by the sea, where the tents were already going up—broad, white shelters against the sun and the shower.

There were the transports, many newly arrived, burdened with troops. There was a hospital ship, and there was one flying a flag with the Red Cross.

"Poor fellow!" said the doctor; "I am afraid he can't live."

"Oh, doctor, do your best for him. Do you know who he is?"

"Oh, that doesn't matter a bit. It is all the same just now, you know. If you can get him down to the hospital or on to the ship, there may be a chance, but I doubt it; three wounds, and one of them bad."

Some of Bob's friends had found him, and were doing their best to help him.

Four of his men, uninjured and willing, were told off to carry him in. Gladly they took the burden, though they were weary for sleep and their feet seemed weighted with iron. Trooper Sam'l, his head tightly bound in a bandage, marched along with the four men, refusing to leave them, though he would have got on faster alone.

"We lost some of our best men, too," he said, "and my captain he got killed; mighty sorry for that, I is. Captain was kind o' cross sometimes, an' he spoke mighty sharp to this

nigger this very day, but I'se mighty sorry; the captain was mighty fine man, and we was very proud of him for a captain. This gentleman ain't no regular, I reckon, or mabbe he wouldn't 'a' stopped to help me; but he's mighty brave man all the same, and I hope de good Lord will spare him. Doctor kind o' shook his head, I thought. Any time you fellows want a lift, reckon I can take hold."

"Oh, go on! Think we're going to let you help carry him?—guess not. Captain is a fine man, though; you're right on that. Been mighty good to us fellows. Guess there ain't no better made than he is."

Lucy had landed from the ship that morning and, though shocked and horrified at the sights and scenes into which she had been so suddenly plunged, she conquered her feelings and took heroic hold of the work which so suddenly confronted the medical staff and nurses.

"It is fortunate that you ladies came," said the doctor. "I don't know what we should do without help. We all knew there might be a battle any day, but this rush of business was quite unexpected—and still they come," he ended, as he looked out of the big tent at the hillside, down which wound a train of wagons and a straggling line of men, unarmed and many leaning on one another as they slowly tottered on. How hot the sun was, scorching in the still air of the morning!

The ships at anchor, or moving about, off the little cove, dipping their bows to the cool, blue waves, seemed havens of refuge compared to this dreadful flat stretch, shut in by the hills, where no breeze could reach it, exposed to the sun and the daily downpour of drenching rain—either fiercely hot, or rain-swept and wet with little rivers of muddy water running down the hillside. What miserable, infested little wooden shanties to use for shelter! Yet there were by no means tents enough.

The confusion and noise blinded

poor Lucy. Half-clad men were being handed out of the wagons and dumped on the ground in the shadow of the tents or bushes, there to await their turns in the operating tent. Ambulance men were lugging them about. Here was a man hopping along on one foot, two soldiers supporting him, poor devil! There was one lying on the ground, apparently dead, covered with mud where he had fallen; his dirty face food for the flies that swarmed about him. Another soldier came by and stopped to fan him with his hat, then dragged the unconscious man into the shade.

Early in the morning, the deep, heavy roar of guns had come from the fleet. Seaward, great domes of smoke had risen over the arch of blue—six miles away, yet the heavy reverberations shook the ground here, and echoed back from the mountains in repeated rumbles of thunder, slowly dying away in the distance.

They were bombarding the batteries again. Cervera must be driven out, or the army must retreat from San Juan and El Caney.

Swiftly the doctors worked. Bones were set, wounds dressed; the smell of disinfectants permeated the tents. Men waited patiently, and took their turn on the tables without a word or a groan. The nurses helped the doctors in silence. The sun scorched through the yellow canvas of the tents. It was fearfully hot.

"But it will rain at about two o'clock," said the doctor; "then it will be too cool." All of life was there that morning in that hive of humanity—death, suffering, patient courage, unselfish giving from the strong to those who were about to die, or to live, as pleased God. The great aftermath of battle! Who shall tell of all the courage, the heroism, the nobility of soul, the sacrifice of self, by which man can prove of what pure fibre he is made? The battle had its glory and triumph, the fierce joy of striving. Here was only the patient facing of suffering, the facts of life and death.

Lucy had looked among them all for one face she feared to find. Almost giving way to her nerves, now that the work was less urgent, she had gone through the tents where the hopeful cases were stretched out on cot or blanket.

"Here's a tent full of men for whom we can do nothing more. Many will not last the day out. We must help to look after them, to write letters or take their messages," said the doctor. Here Lucy had stayed till, unable to endure it longer, she had fled forth to the fresher air and a moment's rest.

In her path was a black soldier with a piece of bacon frying in his tin pan, in his hand a cup of coffee, just lifted from the smouldering fire. Another negro sitting by, a clean bandage wrapped tightly about his head, his white eyeballs and shiny teeth making his black face seem blacker, attracted her attention. She stopped; both men got up and saluted her.

"Is your coffee good?"

"Oh, yes, ma'am, very good; just made fresh. Would you like to taste it? Cup ain't very nice. We ain't got no other."

"No, thank you; I'm going to have some soon. Yours smells very good, though. Are you much hurt?"

"No, ma'am; came near scalping me, though; kind o' hurts, too, but 'tain't nothing."

"What regiment did you say?"

"Tenth, ma'am; Tenth, regular."

"Do you happen to know Captain Yorke? Was he hurt?"

"Why, yes, ma'am. I can tell you all about him. Gentleman saved my life, I reckon; leastwise he got me out of a mighty bad place. Got caught in the wire and he cut me out. Is you a friend of his?"

"Friend of his wife's."

"Well, I reckon it's all the same. Captain's mighty fine man; he's powerfully hurt, but I se praying hard for him, lady, 'deed I is. That's his tent over there under the tree. We just fixed it up a while ago. Oh, yes, ma'am, doctor's been there."

"No, thank you," said Lucy, "I can find it. I see where you mean." And she hurried away to the tent under the trees.

Two soldiers were lying on the grass outside. "May I go in? Is this where Captain Yorke is?"

"Why, yes, lady," said one of the soldiers, jumping up. "I'll just see."

"Say it's a nurse."

"Shall I tell him your name?"

"No—yes."

"Come in," said a weak voice. "Why, Lucy! What brings you here? Well, I am glad; this is more than I deserve. Oh, I feel kind of faint, I must say; still, if you are going to be here, I shall have to brace up. I wouldn't spoil your professional reputation by dying on your hands."

"Now, you must be quiet, or I shall leave. I'll tell you all the news, little by little. Yes, Edith was quite well when I left her," and Lucy turned her face away.

"Oh, I'll never tell him, never! How could she? Poor Bob!—and for that man!"

Sunday had passed—a hot, fair day. The fading echoes of the battle had fled down the coast to the eastward. Conflicting rumors went from mouth to mouth. The *New York* had been off the cove in the morning and had left at full speed at the sound of the first gun. Far down the line of hills hung the smoke, but of the result no one knew till late. Then the news came of the wonderful and complete victory. It swept through the camps of the wounded; it fled up the line to the front; it rose above the towering hills from a thousand cheering throats; over the dancing waves, among the troops on the transports—the grand *Te Deum* of victory.

Lucy had scarcely left Captain Bob.

"He cannot live the night out," said the doctors.

"Oh, Lucy, this is like heaven, to have you here. It is Sunday, too; that's why I think of it. Do you remember when you used to make me go to church with you and asked

me if I knew the collect? I always remember one. It was the Summer you sent me away, Lucy; do you remember?"

"Hush! hush! you mustn't talk."

"Why, Lucy, you are crying; don't, please. Somehow, since you came, I have been living in the past. Ah, well, our lives are ordered, I suppose. Then I got engaged to Edith; the family were so pleased! She was so pretty, too! It was for the twelfth Sunday after Trinity, the one I know. I remember it because you always liked that one. Oh, Lucy, you must take me to church again when I get well, even if Edith won't go. She never liked to, somehow. I wish you would read that to me again. Hark! what are they singing? Oh, I know that; I made the whole regiment sing it many a time. It must be the ships have won. Good! good! Why, that's great, isn't it? I wish I could get up."

"Do lie still, Bob."

"Lucy, you are crying again. I feel like crying, too; it's that hymn. Are those boys singing out there? That's right—sing it, Lucy. I always liked your voice. There goes the music, too. There must be thousands of them singing it all the way to Santiago. That's it—the second verse."

"I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
They have builded Him an altar 'mid the evening dews and damps;
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps—
His day is marching on.

"In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me.

As He died to make men holy
Let us die to make men free,
While God is marching on."

"That's right, Lucy, hold my hand. I am shaking; it's the excitement; that song always thrills me. How dark it's getting! Why, there's Tom and Bill. How are you, boys?

Thank you, Lucy, I think I'll sleep. I am so tired!"

Edith Yorke, in the sumptuous Paris hotel, leaned wearily back in her chair. The morning papers and letters lay on the table, but she was too indifferent to look at them. The count was at his everlasting Cercle de Jeu. *Mon Dieu*, how she detested him already! He was making the money fly, too—her money.

"*Que la vie est amère!* I am afraid I was a fool; it does not seem the same Paris. I wonder what is the matter, what the difference? I thought I should be happy," and she smiled, bitterly, "with the count."

"Celeste, hand me the letters and a paper."

"The *Herald*, madame?"

"Yes, the *Herald*, of course; there is nothing in these French papers I care about. I wonder if there is anything more about that battle," she thought. "It was not a great defeat, as the French papers said—quite the opposite. Bob's regiment was mentioned; I hope he wasn't hurt. Here is a list of the killed and wounded. What! 'Killed: Capt. Robert Yorke, Company F, Regiment—'"

"*C'est monsieur le comte*, madame."

"Oh, tell him I am ill. I don't wish to see him now. Tell him I won't come to luncheon, either," she added.

"*Oui*, madame."

A memorial service was being held for the killed of a regiment that had volunteered for the war. Yorke's old regiment had turned out in force and occupied a large part of the vast city church. The great windows set forth with glowing colors the forms of saints and martyrs, who seemed as if living, thrilling and trembling to the exalting notes of the organ, as the music rose in solemn strains above the silent throng that moved down the dim aisles.

"That's Lucy Brown," whispered a bevy of girls, attracted by the presence of the soldiers. "She looks as if she were going to a funeral; she's worn

black ever since the war; she went down as a nurse."

"Yes; she found Bob Yorke there and nursed him all the time, they say."

"I wonder if they were in love."

"Oh, I don't know; they say, years ago, before he was married, they used to be together a great deal. There never was any engagement, so mamma says. His wife went to Europe while he was down there."

"Yes; isn't it terrible the way she's behaved?"

"I should think so—awful! Will they be married now?"

"Oh, I suppose so."

"But I heard she had left the count already."

Above the whisper of the gathered throng came the grand requiem of the organ, as the people, rising, left the church. How many of them carried away from that noble service its deep and solemn meaning? But one, at least, pale-faced and sad-eyed, a young woman in black, knew that the words of the preacher were true, and that, "He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."



INTERPRETERS

O H, sweetly the last wind of day-time is blowing,
And breathing on blossoms, and wrinkling the lake;
A-flush with the flame of the sun's fiery going,
And silver with lilies a-bloom for your sake.

For your sake, my sweetheart, for your sake the sheathing,
Of boughs with pale petals and intricate lace;
For your sake the magic of Summer's still wreathing,
Whose patterns grew plain when I looked on your face.

For me, till I saw you, the lane had no story
I might not translate from the hawthorn buds there;
And the trees stood close-veiling the delicate glory
Of pale Dryad-girls and their wonderful hair.

But, sweet, when I saw you, strange bells fell a-ringing,
Strange, beautiful words thrilled and throbbed the world through;
And lo! all of beauty was fluting and singing,
A-voice with the exquisite language of you!

ZONA GALE.



OF THE SAME MIND

E DITH—I didn't accept Arthur the first time he proposed.

LENA—You changed your mind, did you?

"No."

A LOVE SONG

By Frank Dempster Sherman

SWEETHEART, now the Summertime
Turns my fancies all to rhyme.

Now the bird and petaled rose,
Every gentle breeze that blows,

Fragrant vine and leafy tree,
Each one holds a word for me.

Waving grasses at my feet
Yield a whispered message sweet;

Whirr of wing and purl of stream
Tempt me forth where all is dream;

Murmurs of the magic spell
Linger in the lily's bell;

Clover-top and buttercup
Offer sweets for me to sup.

Hums the bee a ditty fine,
Drunken with this honey-wine

Sun and shadow, gloom and glow,
Keep beside me where I go,

Winning me with visions fair,
Weaving verses in the air—

Couplets which, if one could catch,
Herrick's lyrics one might match.

Every leaf a secret hides;
In each cloud a song abides;

Moon and stars that gem the night
Lean down, proffering delight;

Full of similes and tropes,
Gathered on their azure slopes.

All I see and know is this
World of beauty, wonder, bliss.

Summer never used to bring
All this ecstasy I sing.

Need I ask her why, to-day,
All this rapture, sweetheart, pray?

Ah, I need not question long,
When each answer is a song!

Some one near, and some one dear,
Speaks the answer I will hear:

It is love, and love alone,
Makes the Summer's joy my own!



THAT IS DIFFERENT

“FOUSDICK dresses very quietly as a rule,” said Bunting.

“Well, when he loses a collar-button under the bureau I expect he makes about as much noise as the rest of us,” remarked Larkin.



NATURALLY

ONE GIRL—Jack tried to kiss me last night.

ANOTHER—What in the world did you do?

“Oh, I was up in arms in a minute.”



AN EXPLANATION

ARTHUR—How did you come to marry a girl you didn't particularly care for?

JACK—I attribute it to the fact that she wanted me worse than I didn't want her.



A FASTIDIOUS EATER

CHIMMIE—What kinder pie do you like best?

MAG—Oh, I dunno. Pumpkin, I guess.

CHIMMIE—Aw, I don't like pumpkin—it musses up yer ears so!

THE LATE SAM PATCH

By Tom P. Morgan

WE have all experienced the annoyance of being unable to recall a name, and that sense of undefinable loss and helplessness which follows our efforts to comb it out of the cobwebs of the past.

We had not thought of its owner before in years. We cared nothing for him when we did know him. He may have been a worthy person, but now we are not even sure that he amounted to that much. We do not care a clam for him personally, where he is nor how he fares, but we should like to know what his name was. It wouldn't advantage us one cent's worth to know, but, hang it, we wish to know just because we can't think of it!

But how vastly more provoking it is to recall a name and not be able to recollect any other fact concerning its possessor! How unpleasant it is to have that bare name, wholly and piteously unclothed with data, without even an individuality to its back, as one might say—and maybe it had previously been a good name, too!—rushing around through the caves of memory, seeking the information necessary to set itself right in one's estimation, like a fevered, first-time father careering through the house in the solemn watches of night, clad in wild apprehension and one or two other things; some of the time mounted on an ungovernable rocking-chair, and at other times picking its prongs out of the intricacies of his anatomy; or pursuing the swift and elusive paregoric bottle to its lair. On such occasions the house is turned completely around, and the match-safe is

at the other side of the wrong room and as innocent of matches as a frog is of feathers; and the door, which he but a moment ago shut at the east end of the room, is now half open at the west end, and invites him to a vain attempt to go on both sides of it at once and leave half of his misguided person on each side—and so on!

The other evening I happened to think of the name of Sam Patch. I know not why I did so, for I do not owe him anything. I never knew him. I think it likely that some time when I was a boy I must have heard something about him. If I knew what it was then, I have forgotten it now. All I could recall was just that abrupt, rectangular name—Sam Patch.

All that night the name ran through my head, seeking a familiar recollection and finding none, like a frantic bat slashing about in an abandoned garret, flapping among the material ghosts of the long ago, now hitting against an accumulation of misinformation, anon knocking from a remote and dusty shelf a long-lost inspiration, then becoming entangled in strings of dry statistics hanging from the rafters, or rattling the ashes out of a collection of dead hopes, and smashing several cherished ideals; and, finally, utterly exhausted, hanging head downward clear up in the under side of the apex of what an appreciative world calls my bump of humor.

I do not know who Sam Patch was, and I do not suppose I should enjoy the knowledge if I had it. Perhaps I should not care to know him, if I did know him. But, as I do not, I

do. When a name occurs to me in a moment of retrospection, I like to recall the identity and appearance of its owner, even if it is only to hate him. I love to murmur to myself that methinks I see him now, and so forth; it has such a dignified sound, you understand. But in the case of Sam Patch, I am unable to regale myself in that manner.

Where did he have his habitat, I wonder; and what did he do for it? What were his preferences; and what was the color of his hair, if he had one? What was he cured of, and by what? What did he do, and why; and, if not, also why? When was his day, and how did he occupy it? Perhaps, though, he was not a man at all. Perchance he was a race-horse—the name has something of that flavor—or a bicycle, or a once new-fangled, but now obsolete, wash-

ing machine. Even, he may have been a brand of oat-meal, though it hardly sounds likely. I can scarcely believe he was a Pullman car; still, it is possible. He could appropriately enough have been a yacht, or a popular song. He may even have been an automobile, but, if so, he was not invented at the time I think he existed; so I judge that lets him out. Perhaps, even, he was nothing but one of those lantern-jawed, two-cornered Baptist oaths, with which my New England uncles used to express their righteous indignation.

But whatever or whoever he was or wasn't, and did or didn't, as the case may have been, I am certain it would be of no interest to me if I knew. But because I do not know, I wish to know. That is the way the human mind, as well as my own, usually runs.



UNHAPPILY MARRIED

HE—She married a fool with plenty of money.

SHE—Then why isn't she happy?

"It brought him to his senses."



CONSIDERATE

SHE—Why did you ask Belle to go with us?

HE—I saw she was going anyhow, and I didn't wish her to feel mean over it.



A SURE THING

FLUBDUBBE—Do you suppose that girl Bilkins is to marry is as rich as she is said to be?

PINHEDDE—No question about it—I know Bilkins.